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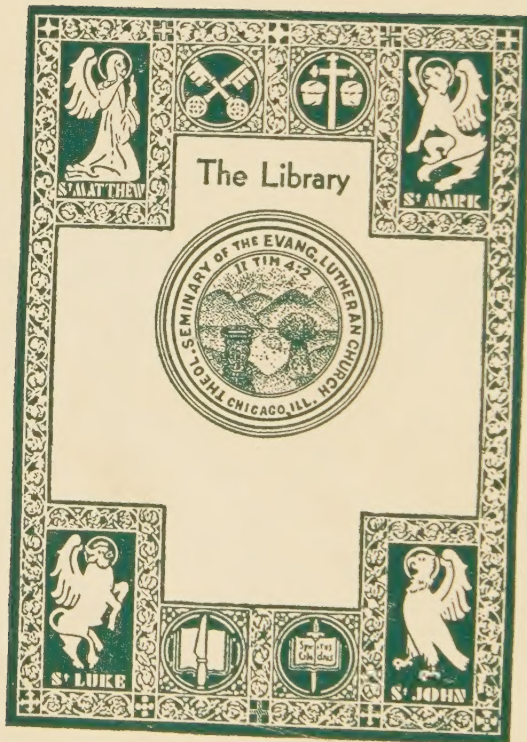
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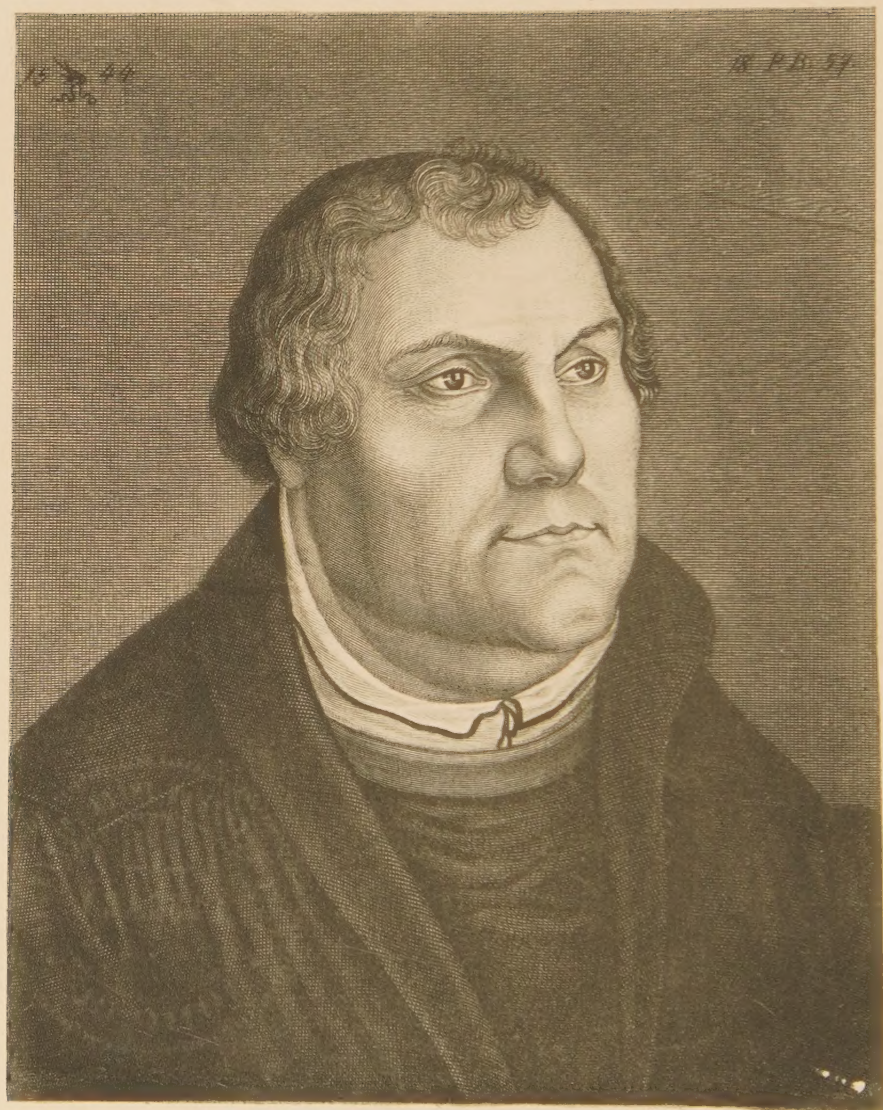
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ERASMUS & LUTHER:
Their Attitude to Toleration



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Martin Luther

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ERASMUS & LUTHER: Their Attitude to Toleration

BY THE REV.

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CONJUGI CARISSIMAE



PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to consider the attitude of Erasmus and Luther to the problem of toleration. The history of solutions of this problem has always fascinated me, and is never far from my thoughts. Life in Ireland inevitably suggests its study, for the mainspring of the troubled conditions of her being is the lack of the spirit which makes for the advance of toleration. Since 1902 I have been steadily gathering books on this subject: Lord Acton's great library naturally was of invaluable aid in forming such a collection. I have commenced my history of the growth of toleration with the year 1492, because it seems to me to mark the dividing-line between the mediæval and the modern world. Part of one of the chapters, entitled "Utopian Toleration," appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, January 1914. As I was pursuing my researches the figures of Erasmus and Luther stood out so prominently that it seemed to me that to devote to them a separate volume would be the only way to give them adequate attention. When one is working at a vast subject, one invariably accumulates ideas and facts outside the main scope. I have, for example, gathered ideas and facts on the large share taken by the conception of natural law in the sixteenth century, the different effects of the Universities on opinion in Germany, France, and England during the same period, the shape that the conception of the Invisible Church assumed in the minds of men from 1510 to 1550, the sixteenth-century growth of scepticism, literary and scientific, and the like. In all these subjects I have tried to supply the background, for one great weakness in histories of thought is that for the most part they have been written, as it were, *in vacuo*. We must bear in mind the course of the relationship between the thought and the circumstance of the age.

Every one knows that Erasmus, like More, entertained one ideal of reform in 1516, and seemingly quite another ideal in

1526. The change is obvious. I set both ideals forth, and I endeavour to explain the change, so far as there was one, that took place, by considering the influence exercised by the thought of Luther, the action and reaction to which it gave rise, the character and foreign policy of Charles V and Francis I respectively, the alliance of the latter with the German Protestants, the invasions of Suleiman I, and the astronomical and geographical discoveries. The attitude of Luther and Erasmus to the problem of toleration has not been interpreted in a narrow sense. Before toleration was possible a process of criticism had to ensue, and from this point of view the *Moriæ Encomium* is as valuable a contribution to the growth of toleration as any piece of work Erasmus ever did. Again, the question of authority can never be long out of the mind of a sixteenth-century leader. His attitude to the powers that be, the divine right of their rule or their human right, the justification of armed resistance to them, are all pertinent to the theme. Then, the study of theology and scholarship contributes much matter. The fact that Luther believed in the slavery of his will to the Divine, rendered him one of the greatest forces of the period. He could never have accomplished his work had he not felt that he was inspired by God. His inspiration rendered him intolerant of all who refused to accept his message after 1525 : before that year he was tolerant in thought and deed. His own labours led in many respects to intolerance : their results contributed to the growth of toleration.

As I work at the sixteenth century I am constantly impressed by the circumstance that very few, even of its most eminent thinkers, entertained the idea of progress. The possession of this idea cuts at the roots of persecution, which is founded upon the view that a body holds complete truth. If there is a growth in knowledge, persecution, *ipso facto*, becomes impossible. Erasmus is quite clear that knowledge of the past and knowledge in the past have increased. Is he clear that fresh ideas, which the scholars of old never knew, will come to light ? The more I ponder his writings the more I realize how hampered he was in his outlook by his adherence to the ideals of the world of antiquity, which does not grasp the conception of progress. Seneca seems to me to be the solitary classical writer who believed in progress in our modern sense. My appendix deals with this absorbing subject. I am anxious gratefully to acknowledge the assistance the following scholars lavishly gave me in my appendix : Mr. E. Bevan, Professor Grenville Cole, Sir Samuel Dill, Mr. J. D. Duff, Dr. W. Warde Fowler, Mr. T. R. Glover, the

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Very Rev. W. R. Inge, Mr. W. H. S. Jones, Mr. A. G. Little, Professor R. A. S. Macalister, Professor F. C. Montague, Professor Gilbert Murray, Professor J. S. Phillimore, Dr. L. C. Purser (who kindly read my proof-sheets), Sir William Ridgeway, and Sir J. E. Sandys. I am afraid these names will raise hopes the appendix will not fulfil.

I use with great profit the fine edition of the letters of Erasmus which Mr. P. S. Allen is issuing. My one regret is that the first volume did not appear before 1906, when I had already bought Le Clerc's edition. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the courtesy and care with which Mr. Allen has answered the questions I sent him. Sir A. W. Ward was good enough to read all my proof-sheets, and I am indebted to him for his valuable co-operation. The late Dr. Gwatkin generously permitted me to draw upon his experience and learning. I am indebted to my publishers for the extreme care they took over the production of my book.

My wife read this volume in all its different stages, corrected errors, and suggested improvements, and to her I owe an obligation which it is impossible to repay.

ROBERT H. MURRAY

11 HARCOURT TERRACE, DUBLIN,

St. Bartholomew's Day, 1919.

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PORTRAITS

MARTIN LUTHER

*After the portrait at Munich, painted two years before death,
by Lucas Cranach*

Frontispiece

ERASMUS

*From the portrait by Holbein in the Louvre. Said to have
belonged to the collection of Charles I, and to have been
painted as a present to Sir Thomas More*

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Dictata super psalterium.
- 1515-1516
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- 1516-1517
Quæstio de viribus et voluntate hominis sine gratia.
In Epistolam Pauli ad Galatas. Ed. J. K. Irmischer, 1843, etc.
Eyn geystlich edles Buchleynn.
- 1517
Auslegung deutsch des Vater Unnser fuer dye einfeltigen Leyen.
Disputatio contra scholasticam theologiam.
Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum (the ninety-five Indulgence Theses).
- 1518
Resolutiones disputationum de indulgentiarum virtute.

Theses for the Heidelberg Disputation.

Asterisci Lutheri adversus Obeliscos Eckii.

Eyn Freihelt dess Sermons Bepstlichen Ablass und Gnad belangend.

Ad dialogum Silvestri Prieriatis de potestate Papæ responsio.

Sermo de virtute excommunicationis.

Appellatio ad futurum concilium universale.

1519

Commentary on Galatians.

Disputatio et excusatio adversus criminationes Eccii.

Resolutio super propositione sua (Lipsiensi) XIII de potestate Papæ.

Scheda adversus Hochstraten.

Resolutiones super propositionibus Lipsiæ disputatis.

Contra malignum Ioh. Eccii iudicium.

Ad Eccium super expurgatione Ecciana.

1520

Eyn Sermon von der Bann.

Sermon von den guten Wercken.

Von dem Bapstum tzu Rome wider dem hochberumpten Romanisten tzu Leiptzh.

Epitoma responsionis Silv. Prieratis.

An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation.

De captivitate babylonica ecclesiæ præludium.

Von der Freyheyt eynes Christen Menschen.

Von den neuen Eckischenn Bullen und Lugen.

Eyn Sendbrieff an den Bapst Leo. den czehenden.

Epistola Lutheriana ad Leonem decimum.

Adversus execrabilem Antichristi bullam.

Widder die Bullen des Endchrists.

Appellatio ad Concilium repetita.

Warumb des Bapsts und seyner Jungern Bucher . . . vorbrant seyn.

Assertio omnium articulorum per bullam damnatorum.

1521

An den Bock zu Leyptzh.

Auff des Bocks zu Leypczick Antwort.

Unterricht der Beychtkinder ubir die vorpotten Bucher.

Responsio extemporaria ad articulos ex Babylonica et Assertionibus excerptos.

Von der Beicht ob der Bapst Macht habe zu gepieten.

Eyn Urteyl der Theologen tzu Paris über die Lere Dr. Luthers. Eyn gegen

Urteyl Dr. Luther's.

De votis monasticis.

De abroganda missa privata.

Vom Missbrauch der Messen.

Translation of the New Testament, published in 1522.

1522

Acht Sermon (against Carlstadt).

Wyder den falsch genanten geystlichen Standt des Bapst und der Bischoffen.

Bulle des Ecclesiasten tzu Wittenbergk.

Epistel odder Unterricht von den Heyligen an die Kirch tzu Erffurd.

Contra Henricum regem Angliæ.

Translation of the Old Testament, published in 1523.

1523

Deutung der czwo grewlichen Figuren, Bapstesels czu Rom und Munchkaibs zu Freyberg ynn Meysszen funden Philippus Melanchthon D. Martinus Luther.

Adversus armatum virum Cokleum.

Von weltlicher Ueberkeytt wie weytt man yhr Gehorsam schuldig sey.

Von Ordnung Gottes Dienst ynn der Gemeyne.

Latin translation of the Bible.

Introduction to Savonarola's Meditatio pia.

Hymns: Nu freut euch liebe Christen gmein; Ein neues Lied wir heben an.

De instituendis ministris ecclesiæ.

An die Herrn Deutschs Ordens das sie falsche Keuscheyt meyden und zur rechten ehlichen Keuscheyt greyffen.

Formula missæ et communionis.

1524

Translation of the Old Testament (second part, from Joshua to Esther).

Prælectiones in Prophetas minores (1524-26).

Widder das blind und toll Verdamnis.

Dass Elltern die Kinder zur Ehe zwingen noch hyndern.

Der Psalter deutsch.

Von Kauffshandlung und Wucher.

Widder den newen Abgott und allten Teuffel der zu Meyssen sol erhaben werden.

Eyn Brieff an die Fürsten zu Sachsen von dem auffrurischen Geyst.

Geistliches Gesangbüchlein (with twenty-four hymns by Luther).

German Old Testament (third and final part, omitting the Apocrypha).

1525

Widder die hymelischen Propheten.

Ermanunge zum Fride auff die zwelff Artikel der Bawrschafft ynn Schwaben.

Vertrag zwischen dem löblichen Bund zu Schwaben und den zweyen Hauffen der Bawrn am Bodensee und Algew.

Wider die mordischen und reubischen Rotten der Bawren.

Eyn schrecklich Geschicht und Gericht Gottes über Thomas Müntzer.

Eyn Sendbrieff von dem harten Buchlin widder die Bauren.

Notes to the twenty-eight Articles of the Erfurt Council.

De servo arbitrio.

Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Gottis Diensts.

1526

Das Bapstum mit seinem Gliedern gemalet und beschrieben.

Sermon von dem Sacrament des Leibs und Bluts Christi widder die Schwarmgeister.

Annotationes in Ecclesiasten.

Ob Kriegsleutte auch ynn seligen Stande seyn künden.

1527

Das diese Wort Christi (Das ist mein Leib, etc.) noch fest stehen widder die Schwarmgeister.

Translation of Isaiah.

Auff des Königs zu Engelland Lesterschrift.

Sermons on Leviticus and Numbers.

In Esaiam scholia ex D. M. L. prælectionibus collecta.

Trostunge un die Christen zu Halle uber Er Georgen yhres Predigers Tod.

Ein' feste Burg (1528 ?).

Lecture on Titus and Philemon.

1528

*Unterricht der Visitatorn an die Pharhern ym Kurfurstenthum zu Sachsen.
Vom Abendmal Christi Bekenntnis.*

Ein Gesichte Bruder Clausen ynn Schweytz und seine Deutunge.

Lecture on 1 Timothy.

Von der Widdertauffe an zween Pfarhernn.

De digamia episcoporum propositiones.

New edition of the German Psalter.

Three series of Sermons on the Catechism.

Vom Kriege widder die Türcken.

1529

Von heimlichē und gestolen Brieffen.

Deudsch Catechismus.

Der Kleine Catechismus für die gemeine Pfarher und Prediger.

Ein Trawbüchlin für die einfeltigen Pfarherr.

Teütsche Letaney.

Sermons on Deuteronomy.

Preface to Melancthon's *Exposition of Colossians*.

Preface to Brenz's *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*.

Wittenberg Song-book, with new hymns and a preface.

Marburg Conference and Articles.

Articles of the Schwabach Convention.

Eine Heer-Predigt widder den Türcken.

Scholia to Ps. cxviii.

1530

New edition of the New Testament.

Translation of Daniel.

Lecture on the Song of Solomon.

Vermanig an die geistlichen versamlet auff dem Reichstag zu Augsburg.

Translation of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets (1530-2).

Twenty-one Sermons.

Auff das Schreien etlicher Papisten über die siebentzen Artikel.

Das schöne Confitemini (Ps. cxviii).

Short Exposition of the first twenty-five Psalms.

German Exposition of *Æsop's Fables* (1530 ?).

Glosses on the Decalogue.

Widderruff vom Fegefeuer.

*Etlich Artikelstück so M. L. erhalten wil, wider die gantze Satans Schüle un
alle Pforten der Hellen.*

Brieff an den Cardinal Ertzbischoff zu Mentz.

Der lxxxii Psalm ausgelegt (Deals with the attitude of the State to the heretic).

Vermanung zum Sacrament des Leibs und Bluts unsers Herrn.

Sendbrieff D. M. L. von Dolmetzscheñ.

1531

New edition of the Psalms.

Auff das vermeint Keiserlich Edict ausgangen jm 1531 Jare.

Warnunge an seine lieben Deudschen.

Widder den Meuchler zu Dresen gedrückt.

Commentarius in Epistolam ad Galatas.

Exemplum theologiæ et doctrinæ papisticæ.

1532

- Brieff von den Schleichern und Winckelpredigern.*
An den Durchleuchtigen Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herrn Herrn Albrechten
Marggraffen zu Brandenburg.
 Preface to Bugenhagen's edition of *Athanasii libri contra idolatriam*.
 Sermon on Charity.
 Translation of the Apocrypha.
Enarratio in psalmos graduales.
Brieff an die zu Franckfort am Meyn.

1533

- Sermons on 1 Corinthians xv.
Verantwortung der auffgelegten Aufrur.
Die kleine Antwort auff H. Georgen nehestes Buch.
Von der Winckelmesse und Pfaffen Weihe.

1534

- Ein Brieff D. Mart. Luth. von seinem Buch der Winckelmessen.*
Biblia das ist die gantze Heilige Schrift.
Præfatio in Antonii Corvini librum de Erasmi concordia.
 Preface to Urbanus Rhegius's *Widderlegung der Münsterischen newen . . .*
Bekentnus.
 Preface to the *Neue Zeittung von Münster.*
Enarratio psalmi xc.
Klagschrift der Vögel an D. M. Luther über seinem Diener Wolfgang Sieberger.

1535

- Sermon on Infant Baptism.
Etliche Spruche Doc. Martini Luther wider das Concilium Obstantiense (wolt
sagen Constantiense).
Enarrationes in Genesim.
 Sermons.
Disputations De concilio Constantiensi.
 Hymns: *Von Himel hoch ; Sie ist mir lieb ; All Ehr und Lob soll Gottes seyn.*

1536

- Disputations De iustificatione, De muliere peccatrice & Contra missam privatam.*
 Preface to Robert Barnes's (chaplain to Henry VIII) *De vitis pontificum.*
Præfatio in tres epistolas Hussii.
Artickel so da hetten sollen auff's Concilion zu Mantua.
 Disputation *De homine.*

1537

- Die drey Symbola oder Bekentniss des Glaubens Christi jnn der Kirchen*
einträchtiglich gebraucht.
Disputations of Peter Palladius and Tilemann Schnabel.
Eines aus den hohen Artikeln des Bepstlichen Glaubens genant Donatio
Constantini.
 Preface to *Ein alt Christlich Concilium . . . zu Gangra.*
Die Lügend von S. Johanne Chrysostomo an die Heiligen Veter inn dem vermeinten
Concilio zu Mantua.
 Postscript to *Tres Epistolæ I. Hussii.*
Præfatio in epistolas quasdam Hussii.
 First Disputation against the Antinomians, Dec. 18.

Hymns : *Erhalt uns Herr bey deinem Wort ; Vater unser im Himelreich.*
Conciunculæ cuidam amico præscriptæ.

1538

Revised edition of the *Unterricht der Visitatorn an die Pharhern ym Kurfurstenthum zu Sachssen.*

Ratschlag eins ausschus etlicher Cardinel.

Præfatio in librum S. Hieronymi ad Evagrium de potestate papæ.

Brieff . . . wider die Sabbather.

Second Disputation against the Antinomians, Jan. 12.

Third Disputation against the Antinomians, Sept. 13.

Wider den Bischoff zu Madeburg Albrecht Cardinal.

Sermons.

1539

Wider die Antinomer.

Von den Conciliis und Kirchen.

Disputation on Matth. xix. 21.

Preface to Myconius's *Wie man die einfeltigen . . . im Christenthumb unterrichten sol.*

Revision of the German Bible.

An die Pfarhernn wider den Wucher zu predigen.

Sermons.

1540

Disputation *De divinitate et humanitate Christi.*

Preface to Robert Barnes's *Bekantnus des Glaubens . . . verdeudscht.*

1541

Wider Hans Worst.

Vermanunge zum Gebet wider den Türcken.

Preface to Urbanus Rhegius's *Wider die gottlosen blutdurstigen Saulen und Doegeten.*

Hymns : *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam ; Was furchstu, Feind Herodes seer.*

1542

Tract against Bigamy.

Exempel einen rechten Christlichen Bischoff zu weihen.

Von der Juden und jren Lügen.

Preface to Barfuser Mönche *Eulenspiegel und Alcoran.*

Preface to *Verlegung des Alcoran Bruder Richardi Prediger Ordens anno 1300.*

Trost für die Weibern welchen es ungerat gegangen ist mit Kinder geben.

Preface to the Hymn Book.

1543

Von den Letzten Worten Davids.

Lecture on Isaiah ix.

Hymns : *Von Himel kam der Engel Schar ; Der du bist drey in Einigkeit.*

1544

Lecture on Isaiah liii.

Kurtz Bekentnis von heiligen Sacrament.

Sermon at the Dedication of the Castle Church, Torgau.

1545

Wider das Bapstum zu Rom vom Teuffel gestift.

Wellische Lügenschrift von Doctoris Martini Luther's Todt zu Rom ausgangen.

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Barbarossa geübt.*

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*An Kurfursten zu Sachsen und Landgraven zu Hesse von dem gefangenen
H. von Brunswig.*

*Preface to the new edition of the Unterricht der Visitatorn an die Pharhern
ym Kurfurstenthum zu Sachssen.*

1546

Sermons, notably the one on the Parables of the Tares and the Wheat.

CHAPTER I

THE MATURE THOUGHT OF ERASMUS

GREAT is the domination of Voltaire over the eighteenth century, great is the domination of Goethe over the first half of the nineteenth century, but greater still is the domination of Erasmus over the opening years of the sixteenth century.¹ Latin was then the common language of literary men of all nations, and over them all Erasmus reigned supreme: his was the seminal mind of the whole continent. In Poland he ruled through the palatine of Cracow, Christopher of Szdlowicki, the Bishop of Plock, Andreas Kryzcki, and John a Lasco. In England he exercised his sway through Lord Mountjoy, Sir Thomas More, Sir Richard Pace, Cuthbert Tunstall and Cardinal Wolsey. Poland and England were in those days countries sufficiently remote, yet the influence of the humanist was realized in both. Perhaps no one ever demonstrated more clearly the wisdom of Plato's advice—that the world should be ruled by philosophers. The oracle at Delphi was not more consulted by the perplexed Greeks, nor were its utterances received with more profound deference.

The position of Erasmus was not a new one. The learned doctors of the Middle Ages were his predecessors. In that greatest century of their period, the thirteenth, they had created a method of thought. In the fourteenth they evolved a system of ecclesiastical government. In the fifteenth, through the work of the conciliar theory at the Councils of Bâle and Constance, they directed the policy of the Church. What a body of men had accomplished, one man was now to accomplish. Yet was he one? Had he not at his command that formidable machine, the printing-press, to diffuse his ideas throughout Europe? The printing-press is in Germany in 1462; it goes to Rome in 1464, to Venice in 1469, and to Paris in 1470. There are no humanists in the South when Erasmus appears except

¹ Erasmus was born in 1466 and died in 1536.

Giles of Viterbo and the formidable figure of Nicholas Machiavelli. Bembo is a mere Ciceronian, and Sannazar a fastidious poet. Lorenzo Valla passed away in 1457, Pico della Mirandola and Angelo Poliziano in 1494, and Marsilio Ficino in 1499. Italian genius of the rank of Vecellio Titian and Michael Angelo henceforth turns to marble or canvas. The Renaissance crosses the Alps, and the snows of the mountains mark the sign of the Cross on its brow. At Rome and at Florence it was at home in the Court, whereas in Germany its true home was the University. The North has its artist in Albrecht Dürer, its scientist in Nicholas Copernicus. Though Julius Cæsar Scaliger is a native of Padua, he forsakes Italy. Johann Reuchlin hails from Pforzheim, Guillaume Budé and Henri Estienne from Paris, John Colet and Sir Thomas More from London, and Desiderius Erasmus from Rotterdam. Distinguished as Erasmus is as a humanist, he is at least equally distinguished as a great Christian.

With fine insight the portrait of Holbein represents the scholar standing at his desk, writing letter after letter, treatise after treatise, settling questions of grammar, of morality and of theology. He is always reading, writing and thinking. For him to live is to write, and to write is to live. With Petrarch, he could say, "Scribendi enim mihi vivendique unus finis erat." He was more anxious to express ideas than to impress people. Life, however, saved him from being merely a humanist. "Erasmus and Reuchlin," confessed Hutten, "are the two eyes of Germany."¹ "Not to respect, love and venerate Erasmus proves a man lacking in goodness and learning," was the opinion of Lefèvre d'Étaples.² Conrad Mutianus esteemed him "more eloquent than the eloquent Jerome,"³ and Andreas Carlstadt did not hesitate to declare him "the prince of theo-

¹ *Erasmum et Capnionem, duo Germaniæ oculos*. Cf. the letter of Mutianus to Urbanus Rhegius, Oct. 14, in C. Krause's *Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*. In the *Colloquia Apoth. Capnionis* Erasmus compares Reuchlin to his favourite father, St. Jerome. According to Erasmus, God has renewed "the Gospel in the world by his chosen servant." On Reuchlin, cf. Geiger, *Das Studium der hebräischen Sprache in Deutschland*, and, above all, his *Johann Reuchlin, sein Leben und seine Werke*.

² Lefèvre d'Étaples to Erasmus, Oct. 23, 1514 (Herminjard, *Correspondance des Réformateurs*): "Quis non suspiciat, amet, colet Erasmum? Nemo non qui bonus et litteratus fuerat." It is Ep. 315 in P. S. Allen's edition, Vol. II, 37. Lefèvre d'Étaples, whose thought was like that of Erasmus, was born in 1455.

³ Mutianus to Lang, 1517, in C. Krause's *Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*: "Erasmus disertissimo Hieronymo disertior esse videtur," p. 564. Cf. Mutianus to Eoban of Hesse, Aug. 31, 1525 (Hel. Eob. Hessi, *Epistolarum familiarium, libri xii*); "Erasmus . . . cui nisi improbus non favet."

logians," superior even to St. Ambrose and St. Austin.¹ "To tell the truth," Budé wrote to him, "I do not see among the old theologians any they can legitimately prefer to you."² "Almost all scholars are Erasmians," so Johann Eck informed him.³ "What happiness is ours," maintained Lambert Hollonius, "to live in a century in which, at your instigation, under your leadership and thanks to your personal action, letters see their day at the same time as true Christianity."⁴ For John Calvin, Erasmus is "the honour and delight of letters."⁵ Philip Melanchthon considered himself "as a simple soldier under the standards of Erasmus."⁶ To Martin Luther, for a time at least, he was "our honour and our hope,"⁷ the "king of literature."⁸ It is noteworthy that many of Erasmus's admirers are in Holy Orders and members of the Universities. In Italy and Germany, though not in France, the spread of the Renaissance was largely the work of the Universities. In the towns, with the rich merchant or the dignitary of the Church, the new learning gained ground.

The adoration reached such a pitch that Conrad Mutianus⁹ and Beatus Rhenanus¹⁰ testified that this superhuman man

¹ Cited by Barge in his *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*: "Quibus (Augustino et Ambrosio) accedit is, qui illis vel par vel superior est, omnium theologorum præcipuus princeps Erasmus noster, cujus opera plenissimo obsequio atque beneficio totum christianismum demerentur."

² Budé to Erasmus, Feb. 22, 1518 (Le Clerc): "Id quod hactenus tanto abs te successu factum esse censeo, ut certe non videam, quem veterum Theologorum tibi jure antepondere quis debeat." Cf. Epp. 493, 522 and 523 (Allen). On "Le Clerc" cf. p. xi of this book.

³ Johann Eck to Erasmus, Feb. 2, 1518 (Le Clerc), III, 296: "Ut omnes ferme docti prorsus sint Erasmiani"; Allen, III, 209.

⁴ Lambertus Hollonius to Erasmus, Dec. 5, 1518 (Le Clerc): "O nos beatos, quibus contigit nos sæculo vivere, quo indice, duce ac perfectore te et litteræ et Christianismus verus renascentur." Allen, III, 446.

⁵ *Opera*, V, 6.

⁶ Melanchthon to Erasmus, March 23, 1528 (*Melanchth. Op.*, ed. Bretschneider and 1071 F, Le Clerc): "Ego gregarius aliquis miles tua signa sequens." Cf. Melanchthon to Bernard Maurus, Jan. 1519 (*ibid.*): "Erasmus qui etiam doctorum judicio theologiam at fontes revocavit." To the students in divinity, March 1519, he wrote: "Erasmio Roterdo, debemus cum græcæ tum latinæ linguæ studium; debemus item, ut pleraque omittam, illustratam Novi Testamenti lectionem, debemus et Hieronymum."

⁷ Luther to Erasmus, March 28, 1519 (*Briefwechsel*, I, 489 ff.): "Decus nostrum et spes nostra"; Allen, III, 517.

⁸ *Werke*, Erl. ed., III, 13.

⁹ Mutianus to Urbanus, July 1511, in C. Krause's *Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*: "Erasmus surgit supra hominis vires. Divinus est et venerandus religiose, pie, tanquam numen." On Mutianus's praise, cf. Krause, 564; Tentzel, *Histor. Bericht v. Anfange . . . d. Reformation* (Cyprian), 120.

¹⁰ Beatus Rhenanus to Zwingli, Jan. 10, 1520 (Zwingli, *Opera, Epistolæ*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess): "Non venit communi de cempeda metiendus Erasmus, qui humanum fastigium quadranthenus et supergressus." Cf. the

merited the honours due to a god: to Chansonette he was in truth the "divine Erasmus," the "new Evangelist."¹ "Thou incomparable man," declared the humanist Wilhelm Nesen, "thou hast the power to bestow immortality."² He was "the first to turn aside from the theologians of the troubled seas of scholasticism," according to Urbanus Rhegius, "towards the clear source of sacred letters. We are witnesses of an admirable spectacle: belles-lettres and sacred letters are so closely united that we study them at the same time without scandal, though the manœuvres of the ignorant had made enemies of them, not to say even more. It is to your works that we owe this change; you have removed all obstacles in order to substitute at last, in the schools of the theologians, for the knowledge of a vain philosophy the heavenly wisdom of the cross. Rejoice and triumph, O Erasmus."³ Ulrich Zasius declared him to be the greatest of all the scholars Germany had ever possessed.⁴ "It is he that posterity, that intelligent and free judge, will proclaim the author of the increasing light of this century," thought Johann Reuchlin, "the first to lead us to the fountain head, he

lamentations of Eoban of Hesse (Hel. Eob. Hessi, *Epistolarum familiarium*) on the false news of the death of Erasmus in 1522:

"Quando quidem magnus fato concessit Erasmus,
Quis consoletur pectora nostra Deus?"

and to Johann Draconites: "Quid patriam lugemus ademptam? Quid obiisse parentes? Hi peperunt nos secundum corpus, ille secundum animos."

"Nec fuit illo verior alius infantiae nostrae magister. Quo nos vertamus, O Draco? quid auxilii reliquum? Quis alter Erasmus? Curre ad extremos Garamantas, et Indos, ultra Scythiam, Tanaimque nivalem: non invenies. O Draco, perimus. Nemo tibi refert Erasmum."

¹ Claud. Cantiuncula a Brassicanus, June 28, 1522 (*Claudius Cantiuncula und Ulrich Zasius*, ed. Horowitz): "Divus Erasmus." Cantiuncula to Brassicanus, Jan. 24, 1522 (*ibid.*): "D. Erasmus (ut in agro Christiano assiduus est Evangelista) paraphrasim scripsit in Mattheum, Christiano spiritu plenissimam."

² Cf. Steitz, *Nesen*, pp. 42-4, 107.

³ Rhegius to Erasmus, Jan. 4, 1522 (Le Clerc, 1698 D): "Primus tu a turbidissimis scholasticorum lacunis ad fontem sacrarum litterarum revocasti theologis. Rem sane admirabilem videmus, et litteras humaniores et sacras sic connecti ut simul citra tumultum condiscantur quæ ante indoctorum machinationibus erant plus quam hostes, tuis hoc omne lucubrationibus acceptum ferimus, qui omnem movisti lapidem, ut pro inani philosophia in scholis theologorum cœlestis philosophia crucis tandem nosceretur; gaude et triumphe, Erasme." Cf. the letter from G. Schirnus to Erasmus, Sept. 6, 1520 (Enthoven, *Briefe an Desiderius Erasmus von Rotterdam*), and the letter of Matt. Schad (Nov. 19, 1525, *ibid.*).

⁴ He wrote to Erasmus in 1515: "Hoc enim fateri et ex judicio possum sexcentis et amplius retro annis doctiorem te Germaniæ vel omni nunquam contigisse" (*Erasmi Opera*, III, 1540, *Opp.*, Ep. 27; Allen II, 122. Cf. Rieger, *Zasii Epist.*, 274).

has made the classical tongues our own.”¹ “The man of Rotterdam,” wrote John Maldonatus from Burgos, “is the king of the schools of Spain.”² Scholars like Eoban of Hesse, Justus Jonas and Caspar Schalbe made pilgrimages to his home. “The name of Erasmus,” added John Colet, “will never perish.”³

This admiration was not confined to the study of the scholar. Like Voltaire, he was courted by kings and princes. He can tell Polydore Vergil in 1527: “I have drawers full of letters from kings, princes, cardinals, dukes, nobles, bishops, written with the utmost civility. I receive uncommon and valuable presents from many of them.”⁴ German and Italian princelings felt honoured by receiving letters from him.⁵ “The Emperor implores me to come to Spain,” he tells the Bishop of Augsburg, “King Ferdinand wants me at Vienna, Margaret in Brabant, and Henry in England; Sigismund asks me to go to Poland and Francis to France, and all offer me rich emoluments.”⁶ “Everywhere the greatest monarchs invite me,” he told Carondelet, April 30, 1526. Charles V nominated him a councillor and gave him a pension. Ferdinand, the brother of the Emperor, evinced the warmest regard for him: so too did Sigismund, the King of Poland. Francis I envied the glory of his rival in possessing such a subject, tried to attract him to Paris, “promising him mountains of gold,”⁷ and writing him a letter with his own hand. “They say that it is only the third he has written since he ascended the throne.”⁸ With the

¹ Capito, *Mémoire justificatif contre la publication d'une lettre que lui avait adressé Luther*, manuscript from the Bibl. de Bâle (*Antiquitates Gernlerianæ*) 1523, (Enders, *M. Luther's Briefwechsel*): “Cui posteritas, quæ est acris et liberæ censuræ, acceptam feret hujus sæculi redeuntem lucem. Qui nos fontem primus reduxit, qui linguas reddidit nobis, modumque prophetiæ aperuit aliquot sæculis abstrusum.”

² J. Maldonatus to Erasmus, Sept. 1, 1526 (Le Clerc, 1715 D): “Regnas utique, Roterdame, in scholis nostris.”

³ “Nomen Erasmi nunquam peribit” (John Colet, *Epist.*, XII). On the influence of Erasmus, cf. Kalkoff in *Archiv. für Reformationsgesch.*, I Jahrg. (1903-4), 1 ff.

⁴ On the presents he received, cf. Hess, *Erasmus von Rotterdam*, I, 169-70, 190, 231; Krafft, *Briefe und Dokumente*, 75; Müller, *Leben des Erasmus von Rotterdam*, 217; Vischer, *Erasmiana*, 15, 33-4.

⁵ Cf. Melchior Adam, *Vie d'Eobanus Hessus*.

⁶ Erasmus to Christoph von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg, Aug. 26, 1528; *Opp.*, 3, col. 1095 ff. (Le Clerc).

⁷ Erasmus to Bernard, Bishop of Trent, Jan. 16, 1523 (Le Clerc, 744 c): “Rex Galliæ, montes aureos pollicens, invitat ad se.” On Sept. 4, 1524, Erasmus wrote to Tunstall (*ibid.*, p. 813): “Rex . . . incredibili est in me affectu. Expector. Thesauraria Turonensis parata est.”

⁸ Erasmus, *Spongia adversus aspergines Hutteni* (Böcking): “Rex Galliæ toties ad honestissimas condiciones invitat, litteris etiam propria manu

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assistance of Budé, he besought Erasmus to consent to come, assuring him of wealthy livings if he would undertake the direction of the Collège de France, that institution which was to become the rival of Rome and Athens, counteracting the reactionary tendency of the Sorbonne and the Parlement. Charles de Tournon, Archbishop of Embrun, seconded these efforts of his royal master. Scholars like Budé, Nicholas Berauld, de Brie, Cop and J. de Pins, churchmen like Poncher or Huë, magistrates like Ruzé and Deloynes¹ owned him as the head of their school. Henry VIII was equally attracted by him, assigning him a pension, corresponding with him, and almost becoming his collaborator.

Though the humanist was not always on friendly terms with the Church, the popes, from motives of policy or from genuine admiration, promised him marks of their esteem.² Leo X accepted with gratitude the dedication of his edition of the New Testament, and recommended the editor to Henry VIII.³ Adrian VI endeavoured to bring him to Rome, there to compose books in defence of the Church. Paul III entertained the idea of bestowing on him a cardinal's hat, and named him Prior of Deventer. Since the time of Abelard, no man of letters exercised such widespread influence.⁴ It was indeed fitting that the Church should pay regard to the labours of her great son, for he embodied the religious, just as much as the literary, tendencies of the new age. He had reunited in his own person forms of knowledge and tastes that seemed incompatible, "making letters chant the name of Christ, though they were formerly almost pagan." "I have developed languages and letters," he could proudly inform Louis Ber, "for the greatest good of theology."⁵ He was the genius through whose clear

descriptis, id quod negant eum ter a corona suscepta fecisse, quod idem nuperrime fecit rex Angliæ." The date of this letter is October 1522.

¹ On Deloynes' praise of Erasmus, cf. Ep. 494 (Allen).

² Hartfelder, *Erasmus und die Papste*: "So verschieden die Männer sind, welche nach einander den Stuhl Petri innehatten, so weit ihre Bestrebungen auseinandergehen, in der Gunst für Erasmus sind sie gleich. Sie legen grossen Wert darauf, die gewandteste Feder der Christenheit, den berühmtesten Latinisten der Zeit mit reinem internationalen Namen auf ihrer Seite zu haben."

³ Ep. 384 (Allen, II, 184).

⁴ Diltthey, *Auffassung und Analyse des Menschen im XVten und XVIten Jahrhundert*: "Erasmus, der Voltaire des XVIten Jahrhunderts, hat ein Menschenalter lang die Geister beherrscht."

⁵ April 1, 1529 (Le Clerc): "Provexi linguas ac politiores littera magno rei theologicæ bono." Cf. the letter to Gattinara, April 20, 1526 (Helfferich, "Beitrag zu dem Brieflichen Verkehr des Erasmus mit Spanien")": "Excitari linguarum ac bonarum litterarum studia, theologiam scholasticam, nimium prolapsam ad sophisticas arguttas, ad fontes divinorum et ad veterum

brain all the questions of the time circulated, finding there an alembic whence they emerged clarified. What Leonardo da Vinci meant to the world in 1500, what Bacon meant in 1600, what Leibniz meant in 1700, what Goethe meant in 1800, Erasmus meant in the second and third decades of the sixteenth century.

That the eulogies of the friends of the scholar were deserved is manifest from his early correspondence. Two letters of the years 1498 and 1504 render this evident. In the first he maintains, "I desire nothing except to secure leisure to live wholly to one God, to repent the sins of my indiscreet youth, to pore over the Holy Scriptures, either to read or to write something."¹ In the second he writes, "I shall . . . address myself in freedom and with my whole heart to divine studies in which I mean to spend the remainder of my life. . . . I have perused a good part of the works of Origen, under whose teaching I think I have made some progress. He seems to disclose some original springs and points out the principles of theological science."² To John Colet he confides: "You will find me a stranger to ambition . . . who yields easily to all in doctrine, to none in faith."³ In another communication to the English humanist his aims stand out: "In your dislike of that sort of neoteric divines, who grow old in mere subtleties and sophistical cavillings, your opinion is entirely my own. In our day, Theology, which ought to be at the head of all literature, is mainly studied by persons who from their dullness and lack of sense are scarcely fitted for any literature at all."⁴ "I am ready," he informed Bensrott, "to pawn my clothes rather than be deprived of Greek books."⁵ "The moment I get some money," he confessed, "I will buy Greek books, and then clothes."⁶

Theology to Erasmus is truth, truth which must influence life. The aim of all religion is less to enlighten the mind than to transform the heart. Faith, hope and charity are the essence of Christianity. "What is religion?" is the question he addresses to Richard Foxe, Bishop of Winchester. "Is it

orthodoxorum lectionem revocavi." This article is in *Zeitschrift für histor. Theologie*, Niedner, Leipzig, 1859.

¹ *Erasmi Opera*, III, Ep. 3, p. 4 B (Le Clerc); Allen, I, 202. Written in 1498 to Arnold Bostius.

² *Ibid.*, III, p. 94 E. Cf. Nichols's ed., I, p. 374; Allen, I, 403.

³ *Ibid.*, III, Ep. 61, p. 39 E. Nichols dates this letter 1499; I, p. 208; Allen, I, 245. Allen's date is Oct. 1499.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1790 E. Cf. Nichols's ed., I, p. 220. Cf. also *Antibarbarorum*, Lib. I, *Opp.*, X, 1706, 1707 and 1710.

⁵ Ep. 160 (Allen, I, 368), July 18, 1501.

⁶ Ep. 124 (Allen I, 288).

anything else but true and perfect love? Is it not to die with Christ? Is it not to live with Him? Is it not to be only a body, only a soul with Christ?"¹ Through the Saviour we are one with God, and therefore one with all men. Theology requires a foundation of learning. For Erasmus is clear that if God does not require our knowledge, He does not require our ignorance. Therefore, at the age of twenty-two, in 1488, he had commented on the Epistle to the Romans.² In 1505 he had published a Latin translation of the New Testament of Lorenzo Valla, with notes. In 1507 he asked Aldus Manutius to publish the Greek text of the New Testament. Throughout his early work there runs the assumption that theological knowledge is ascertainable, for it depends on the understanding of the text of the Bible, which, in spite of problems of interpretation, is clear.³ The efforts of the schoolmen, those pseudo-theologians, are vain. They define the indefinable, they distinguish the indistinguishable, and they divide the indivisible. "A part is divided into three; the first of these three parts into four, and each of these four is divided again into three. . . . What is further removed from the manner of the Prophets, of Christ, of the Apostles?"⁴ All the scholastic philosophers, except St. Thomas Aquinas, fall under his censure.⁵ Erasmus is wearied with the discussions on essence, accident, the nature of the angels and their power of acquiring knowledge, the infinity of intelligibles, the nature of God, the problem whether He could do otherwise than He has done, and the like.⁶ Such questions are neither in the Gospels nor in the Fathers. They are like the heads of the Hydra: the more you cut them, the more they grow. He thoroughly agreed with St. Ambrose that it did not please God to save men by dialectic.⁷

The *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, 1503,⁸ shows that its

¹ Erasmus to Foxe, Ep. I, p. 417, Jan. I, 1506 (Allen.)

² Erasmus to Botzheim (Allen, I, p. 34): "Commentarii in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos cujus operis absolveramus libros quatuor ante annos, ni fallor, viginti duos."

³ Cf. his Preface to the New Testament and his *Ratio . . . perveniendi ad veram theologiam*, V, p. 117.

⁴ *Ratio . . .*, V, p. 82. Cf. Ellinger, *Philipp Melanchthon*, 126-7, 139.

⁵ Paraclesis in Nov. Test., 3.

⁶ *Ratio . . .*, V, p. 134. The *Ratio* forms part of the introductory matter in the *Novum Instrumentum*, Feb. 1516, and in the second edition, March 1519, was much increased in size. In Nov. 1518 it was printed separately and was consequently removed from the *Novum Instrumentum*.

⁷ *Epistola apologetica ad Martinum Dorp.*, Opp., IX, 8.

⁸ *Erasmi Opera*, V, Ep. 164. Cf. Ep. 403 (Allen). *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, 230; the article on Erasmus and Luther in *Deutsch-Evangel. Blätter*, 1906, Hft. I; Ellinger, 43.

author was as well aware as his friend Colet that the Church stood in urgent need of a purge from formalism. Rites, he argued, ceremonies and ecclesiastical rules possess in themselves no value. Indeed Erasmus was careful to let Colet know that "I wrote [it] to display neither genius nor eloquence, but simply for this—to counteract the error which makes religion depend on ceremonies, and in more than Jewish observances, while strangely neglecting all that pertains to true piety. I tried to teach, moreover, the art of piety after the manner of those who have composed the rules of [military] discipline."¹ He proposes remedies against five principal vices, and these remedies are based on the plain teaching of Christ. He avoids all reference to a final ecclesiastical authority, though he does not hesitate to assume the supremacy of Christ. Men may fast, may worship saints, and may seek absolution; but their salvation does not abide in these forms. He nowhere urges the appeal to the existing Church as the ultimate one. A sound, sane, reasoned individual judgment in the interpretation of tradition he emphasized just as Petrarch had done. The goal of all our efforts is Christ, and the road to Him is faith. "Faith is the only door which leads us to Christ."² He develops precisely the same conception of faith in his *Paraphrases*, where he takes occasion to point out that in it "there is no compelling force, but by it all are invited" to come to Him.³ His is "no unmeaning word, but love, simplicity, patience, purity." Erasmus, like all humanists, was not prepared to believe in faith without works, but he was obviously prepared to lay more stress on faith than on works,⁴ and more stress on liberty than on grace. This "dagger of the Christian knight" poured scorn on the acceptance of scholastic dogmas and on the performance of outward rites. If men must adore the bones of Paul locked up in a casket, let them also adore the spirit of Paul which shines forth from his writings. If men honour the image of Christ's face carved in wood or stone, or painted upon canvas,

¹ *Erasmi Opera*, III, p. 94, Ep. 102 (Allen, I, 403). Written probably in Dec. 1504. Cf. the *Paraphrases*, Ro. xiv. 4-5, p. 823; 1 Tim. ii. 8, p. 1042; St. Mark ii. 27, p. 179; the *Adnotationes*, p. 118; and his *De Interdicto usu carnis*.

² *Enchiridion*, *Opp.*, V, 21: "Fides unica est ad Christum janua."

³ *Paraph.*, p. 650. Cf. Ellinger, 76, 161.

⁴ *Enchiridion*, c. 8, 6: "Hoc certe indubitatissimum est, fidem sine moribus fide dignis, adeo nihil juvare, ut etiam in cumulum cedat damnationis." Cf. Gian Francesco Pico, *De fide et ordine credendi*, Theor. xxvi, p. 320: "Cum autem fidem dico, opera etiam simul intelligo et charitatem sine quibus mortua est." Cf. Lefèvre d'Étaples, *Comm. in Paulum*, p. 68, p. 69, p. 178.

how much more ought they to honour the image of His mind expressed by the art of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel writings.

In the spirit of Rabelais, he censures the monks for their superstitious observance of ceremonies, for the hatred they display in exacting them from others, and for the consequent haughty censorship they exercise over their lives.¹ He attacks the monks, but he does not attack their institution: the foundations of the monastery are designedly left unmoved. He is as little attached to rites as Lefèvre d'Étaples, though like the French scholar he does not mean to suppress them. In a word, the Church is an historical institution with a Divine foundation. Unlike Colet, he bestows more importance on the allegorical than on the literal meaning of the Bible.² He warns men against the latter interpretation, exhorting them to break the hard and bitter husk so as to reach the sweet kernel—the spiritual sense—which is concealed within, and laying emphasis on the words of Jesus, “It is the Spirit which quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” “The Bible is,” in his view, “sterile if we do not find the hidden meaning,”³ at once pointing out the influence of Platonism on this method of interpretation. Erasmus, like Pico della Mirandola⁴ and Lefèvre d'Étaples, finds allegory everywhere in the sacred record. The Story of the Fall is an allegory: so are the Flight into Egypt, the Birth of Isaac, the number of the wars of Israel against the Philistines, the adventures of Jonah. There are allegories in the history of the Judges and Kings of Israel just as they are present in the history of Livy. Nor are these allegories confined to the Old Testament: they are just as much in the New. We cannot, he remarks, forget how often Jesus spoke in parables. “The Gospel has its flesh and has also its soul.”⁵ There are, he admits, abuses in this method, but the abuse does not prevent the use; and this method marks the time “when divine wisdom lisped for us,”⁶ whereas now it speaks more plainly: herein is progress.

¹ Cf. *Antibarbarorum*, Lib. I, x, p. 1699: “Those who boast themselves of their religious profession think that it is the perfection of piety to know nothing, and the greater part are slaves either of their purses or their bellies; the dignitaries of the Church like better to imitate Epicurus than Cicero.”

² *Opp.*, V, pp. 6–10.

³ *Ibid.*, c. 8, 5 (p. 29).

⁴ *Opp.*, I, 94; *Heptaplus*, p. 3; *Apologia*, pp. 125–30.

⁵ *Enchiridion*, c. 8, 5: “Habet evangelium carnem suam, habet et spiritum.”

⁶ *Ibid.*, c. 2, p. 8: “Balbutit nobis divina sapientia. . . . Lac porrigit infantulis in Christo. . . . Tu vero festina adolescere et ad solidum propria cibum.”

Religion to the author is a process, not an act. Virtue, he insists, is a becoming. If it is true, he contends, in the spirit of Socrates, that evil is the result of ignorance, the first condition of virtue is knowledge of one's self.¹ Let man look inward before he looks outward, though he is careful to add, "Carry out nothing under the pressure of feeling, but everything by reason." It is easy, therefore, to understand the high place that education occupies in religion. Stoicism will teach serenity in suffering, Sparta will speak of devotion to one's country. The holiness of Phocion, the poverty of Fabricius, the magnanimity of Camillus, the severity of Brutus, the modesty of Pythagoras, the integrity of Cato—these are plainly written in the annals of Greece and Rome. Erasmus is well aware that these men did not hold the doctrine of the fall of man. "What antique philosophy calls reason," he teaches, "is what Paul sometimes calls Spirit, sometimes the hidden man, sometimes the law of reason. What for philosophy is feeling is for him the flesh, the body, or the man as the world sees him, or the law of his members. Plato has imagined two souls in man; and in this man Paul discovers two beings so profoundly united, that neither can exist without the other in heaven or hell; so completely distinct that the death of the one is the life of the other."²

Antiquity looks to reason, Christianity to grace. In the union of the ideals of Antiquity and Christianity, man becomes complete: he is a whole being. He stands out against the asceticism of the Middle Ages, and against the paganism of the Renaissance. In classical times the State left no room for the individual. In mediæval times he is always part of a body or a class, a member of a guild or a fraternity, a squire or a knight. At last he is himself, knowing himself through the knowledge of the past and the saintliness of the present. The former, Erasmus allows, may be unduly cultivated: the renaissance of antiquity may be, as in Italy, only another name for the renaissance of paganism. "It is useful," he shows, "to taste profane literature . . . but, as I have said, to a certain age, with measure, with prudence and with careful choice . . . in short, what is vital in the closest intimacy with Christ."³ The Fathers he

¹ *Enchiridion*, c. 5: "Unica ad beatitudinem via. Prima ut te noris." Cf. c. 8, 6.

² *Ibid.*, c. 3; c. 4, 5.

³ *Ibid.*, c. 2. Cf. his letter to Wolfgang Capito, Feb. 26, 1517 (Allen, I, 487): "Unus adhuc scrupulus habet animum meum ne sub obtentu priscae literaturæ renascentis caput erigere conetur paganismus . . . aut ne renascentibus Hebræorum literis, Judaismus medidetu per occasionem reviviscere." On

recommends are Origen, Ambrose, Austin, Jerome, whose books he read with increasing admiration : all these were interpreters after his own heart. Like Eusebius and his favourite Jerome he returns to the utility as well as the beauty of the classical poets in understanding the inspiration of Scripture. Towards the end of the book the Paulinism of the German reformer seems foreshadowed, though Erasmus had no special affinity with the mind of the Apostle to the Gentiles.¹ Paul is "the light of the Church," the inspiring interpreter of faith and grace.² The scholar discerns opposition between dogma and faith, between the Church and the Gospel, but it is an opposition capable of reconciliation in a disciplinary or a doctrinal development. He does not demand a revision of dogma, nor does he deny its truth. What he seeks in the Church is an understanding frame of mind to the new knowledge, a freer, deeper and more spiritual attitude to religion. The *Enchiridion militis christiani* failed to commend itself to Ignatius Loyola, but it found favour with Guillaume Budé, William Tyndale and the future Adrian VI, then a sober-minded Dutch professor.

Eight years after the appearance of the *Enchiridion* came a book which dissolved all Europe in laughter, the *Moriæ Encomium, The Praise of Folly*.³ The *Enchiridion* was intellectual and religious, the new work was classical and humanistic. For if on the one hand the author belongs to the Renaissance, on the other he belongs just as unmistakably to the Reformation. At a time in which printing was yet in its infancy, the first edition appeared with no less than 1800 copies, an enormous issue for those days, yet less than a month after the appearance of the book for sale there were no more than 600 with the bookseller.⁴ It was printed more than seven times in the course of a few months.⁵ To the monks his satire was as the sword of Gideon, and to all his wit was as the spear

reading the classical poets, cf. c. 2, p. 7: "Neque . . . improbaverim præcludere in litteris poetarum et philosophorum gentilium . . . , modo modice . . . quis eas attingat et quasi in transcurso arripiat . . . verum nolim te cum gentilium litteris, gentilium et mores haurire."

¹ *Enchiridion*, c. 8, 5, p. 35.

² On the high place accorded to St. Paul, cf. *Vita Joannis Pici*, by his nephew, who tells us that Pico della Mirandola placed the Pauline Epistles above all the writings of antiquity. Cf. also the Preface to Lefèvre d'Étaples, *Comm. in Paulum*; Budé, *De Asse*, p. 158, and Bade, Preface to *Terence*, c. 1.

³ Cf. Erasmus to More, June 9, 1511 (Allen I, Ep. 222). Cf. also Feugère, *Érasme, Étude sur sa vie et ses ouvrages*, 341; Hess, I, 493; Ellinger, 43. For similar attacks on superstition by Bebel, Buschius and other humanists, cf. Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, etc., 47, 97.

⁴ Ep. 328 (Allen, I).

⁵ Erasmus's letter to Martin van Dorp, Ep. 337 (Allen, II).

of Ithuriel. Fortunate it was for Erasmus that Folly wore such a mask of jest when she appeared on the scene. The lash of Juvenal or Swift is forgotten in the mocking smile of Lucian or Voltaire. It is no matter of surprise that the creator of the *Moriæ Encomium* never formally joined the party of reform. His was not the enthusiasm of his younger rival: his was the calm observation of the irrationalities of mankind. How much satire undermined the prestige of Rome is plain to all who turn over the leaves of Sebastian Brandt's *Ship of Fools*,¹ the *Vadiscus* and other pungent writings of Ulrich von Hutten, the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*² of Crotus Rubianus and others, the *Facetiæ* and the *Triumphus Veneris* of Heinrich Bebel, and the *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua* of Rabelais. Is satire the price which mankind pays for freedom? Its roll of service includes the assaults of Luther on the monks, of Bacon on the Schoolmen, of Pascal on the Jesuits, of Butler on the Puritans, of Voltaire and Anatole France on superstition, and of Bentham on lawyers. Shaftesbury was the opponent of enthusiasm, that is fanaticism, which, like all convictions, he would have exposed to the test, not of persecution, but of wit and humour. These satirists realized the sagacity of this expedient. Their pamphlets circulated on all sides, creating and moulding public opinion. They assumed that the corruption of the clergy in general, and the monks in particular, was a matter known to all. The *Ship of Fools* is in reality what the *Praise of Folly* is only on the surface. It is a skit on the follies of mankind, whereas the work of Erasmus is, in fact, an exposure of the follies and frauds of those who professed to serve the Church. For this very reason it must be counted among the forces preparing for the Reformation. Erasmus, Reuchlin and Lefèvre were, in spite of themselves, the precursors of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin.

The author satirized follies of all kinds, the student for his sickly look, the grammarian for his self-satisfaction, the philosopher for his quibbling, the sportsman for his love of butchery, the superstitious for his belief in the virtues of images and shrines, the sailor for his folly in praying to the Virgin, and the sinner for his foolishness in believing in the efficacy of pardons and indulgences. The king no less than his subjects, the cardinal no less than his clergy, winced at the scourge of this

¹ Zarncke, one of its many editors, says that Brandt was in the fifteenth century what Henri de Veldeckin had been in the thirteenth, Opitz in the seventeenth, and Goethe in the eighteenth.

² Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, etc., I, 284.

Merry Andrew. To Folly mankind is indebted for all the happiness they enjoy. She not only gives life itself, but all that contributes to its pleasure. At her suggestion woman was created, "a foolish, silly creature, no doubt, but amusing and agreeable, and well adapted to mitigate the gloom of man's temper by familiar intercourse." Woman owes all her advantages to Folly. The aim of her life is to please man, and this she could not do without Folly. If any one doubts this, he has only to consider how much nonsense a man talks to a woman whenever he wishes to enjoy the pleasure of her society. Friendship, love, marriage, success in life, all are dependent on the aid of Folly.

The credulity of the time moves the writer to indignation, which is not quite in keeping with the light tone Folly deigned to assume. She might laugh at those who calculated with mathematical precision the number of years, months and hours of purgatory, and at those who fondly believed that they could wipe off a whole life of sin by a small coin. "But what shall I say of those who flatter themselves with the pleasant delusion that they can grant pardons for sins, and who measure out the periods of purgatory, as it were, with time-pieces, meting out centuries, years, months, days, hours, as if by a mathematical table where there could be no possibility of error? Or of those who, trusting to certain little magic marks and prayers which some pious impostor invented either for amusement or with a view to gain, promise themselves wealth, honours, pleasures, abundance, unfailing health, and a green old age, and in the other world a seat next Christ himself—which, by the way, they would not wish to reach for a long time yet; that is, not till the pleasures of this life, however much against their will and however closely they may have clung to them, shall nevertheless have flown—then they would wish those heavenly joys to follow. Here is a man—say a merchant, or a soldier, or a judge—who thinks that by payment of a single coin out of his robberies, all the vileness of his life may once for all be swept away, and imagines that so many perjuries, lusts, fits of drunkenness, so many quarrels, impostures, perfidies, acts of treachery, can be redeemed as by contract—aye, so redeemed that he may now return to a new round of crime. But could any frame of mind be more foolish—I mean happier—than theirs who by the daily recitation of those seven verses from the Psalms promise themselves more than supreme happiness? . . . Now, if in this state of things any odious man were to rise up and proclaim what is doubtless true—Thou shalt not perish miserably if thou

livest well ; thy sins will be forgiven, if to thy money thou addest hatred of thy misdeeds, and after that tears, watching, prayer, fasts, and changest thy whole manner of life ; such and such a saint will bless thee if thou wilt endeavour to follow his example—I say, if the wise man should bray out such truths as these, behold of how great happiness he would rob mankind, and into what confusion he would plunge them.”

The theologians suffer from the lash of Folly : “They are deeply in my debt, as it is I who bestow upon them that self-love by which they are able to fancy themselves caught up to the third heaven, and to look down upon the rest of mankind as if they were so many sheep feeding on the ground ; and indeed they pity their miserable condition, while they are themselves by so vast an array of magisterial definitions, conclusions, corollaries, propositions explicit and implicit, and have so many loopholes of escape, that no chains, though they should be forged on the anvil of Vulcan, can hold them so fast but that they will contrive to extricate themselves ; for which purpose they are provided with a number of fine distinctions with which they can cut all knots more easily than the sharpest axe, and with a vast supply of newly invented terms and words of prodigious length. They are extremely ingenious, too, in explaining the profoundest mysteries of divinity ; as, by what process the world was created and fashioned ; through what channels the plague-spot of original sin was transmitted to posterity ; in what manner, by what degrees, and in how long a time, Christ was made perfect in the Virgin’s womb ; how accidents can subsist in the consecrated wafer without any substance in which to adhere.”

The scholastic system endures much from the lash of the sprite. Its originators “possess such learning and subtlety that I fancy that even the Apostles themselves would need another Spirit, if they had to engage with this new race of divines about questions of this kind. Paul was able ‘to keep the faith,’ but when he said ‘Faith is the substance of things hoped for,’ he defined it very loosely. He was full of charity, but he treated of it and defined it very illogically in the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. The Apostles, too, were in the habit of consecrating the Host, which they surely did most religiously ; and yet if they were questioned as to the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem*, the nature of transubstantiation, how the same body can be in different places at the same time, the difference between the attributes of the body of Christ in heaven, on the cross, and in

the sacrament of the Mass ; at what moment of time transubstantiation takes place ; whether the prayer through which it is effected is a discreet quantity having no permanent punctum, they would not, I fancy, have answered with as much acumen as our Scotists now display in their dissertations and definitions.”¹ Folly, all unconscious of her high mission, was lowering the prestige of the orthodox, thereby preparing the way in no small degree for the reformer. Kings and nobles, cardinals and bishops, Leo X himself, read the *Moriæ Encomium* with a delight which would have been much diminished had they grasped its inner significance.²

From Church to State is an easy transition, and accordingly in 1515 Erasmus wrote the *Institutio Principis Christiani*, which discusses the education of a Christian prince.³ Machiavelli's survey of the same problem had been then in private circulation for two years. The humanist admits the position that the king rules by right divine, and draws the conclusion that his rule ought to be divinely right. He tells Prince Charles that “there is no duty by the performance of which you can more secure the favour of God than by making yourself a prince useful to the people.”⁴ If princes were perfect in every virtue, a pure and simple monarchy might be desirable ; but as this can hardly ever be in actual practice, as human affairs are now, a limited monarchy is preferable, one in which the aristocratic and democratic elements are mixed and united, and so balance one another.⁵ This is the mixed State which Cicero declared the Roman State to be.⁶ The prince is urged to consider that “these are not your subjects whom you force to obey you, for it is consent which makes the prince, but those are your true subjects who serve you voluntarily,” a conception which the author afterwards applied to problems of the Church. Erasmus, however, virtually employs Quesnay's argument of *pauvres paysans, pauvre royaume ; pauvre royaume, pauvre roi*.⁷ The prince of the Italian is unmoral, that of the cosmopolitan is moral. To Machiavelli the saying of Louis XIV is true, to

¹ This passage first appears in the 1519 edition, p. 178 ff. Cf. his *Ratio* . . . *Opp.*, IV, p. 83.

² *Opp.*, III, 275 B. According to Geiger, *Renaissance und Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland*, there are three successive epochs in the German Renaissance: theological, scientific, polemical. But is not Erasmus both a theologian and a polemist, and is not his work scientific ?

³ Cf. *Epp.* 334 and 393 (Allen).

⁴ *Opp.*, IV, p. 567.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 576.

⁶ Cicero, *De Repub.*, I, 29. Cf. Polybius, VII, 11 ; Plato, *Laws*, I. 712.

⁷ This is the motto of Quesnay, *Tableau économique avec une explication, ou Extrait des Économies de Sully* (1758).

Erasmus that of Frederick the Great is no less true. The prince of the scholar is good, not because he is a king by right divine, not because he derives his authority from the Church, but simply because he does his duty as a man in the station of life to which he has been called. Both Erasmus and Machiavelli leave the people to the one side in their State. Erasmus, in true Renaissance spirit, teaches that the prince is to be far removed from the opinions held by the people: it is low, common, unworthy of him to feel with the people. As in the *Praise of Folly* there is a strong appeal made on behalf of peace and for international arbitration.¹ For "Christ founded a bloodless empire. He wished it always to be bloodless. He delighted to call himself the Prince of Peace."

Martin van Dorp, successively professor of philosophy and theology at Louvain University, received in 1515 an illuminating epistle from the scholar. Erasmus had not received his letter, but had seen a copy of it in the hands of a friend in which van Dorp regrets the publication of the *Praise of Folly*, approves of his labours upon St. Jerome, and dissuades him from editing the New Testament. Erasmus is still sick from his voyage, and tired of riding, yet he thinks it better to make any reply than leave a friend in this persuasion, whether of his own or put into his head by others. He regrets the publication of the *Praise of Folly*, enters upon its defence, and speaks of the provocation he has received. He had no other object in its composition than in his *Enchiridion*, his tract *De Principis Institutione*, and his *Panegyricus*. Like princes who keep fools at their courts, to correct lighter vices by their freedom of speech, Erasmus hopes by jesting and good humour to remove the faults of his time. He tells how the *Praise of Folly* was written in More's house, on his return from Italy in a fit of illness, to wile away the time. He denies that its humour is bitter or offensive, and cannot believe that it has produced so great a disturbance, and alienated from him the minds of the theologians. He proves it to be otherwise by the uninterrupted friendship of Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others. They only can have taken offence who, after the shallow training in the rules of Alexander Gallus, the ten categories of Aristotle, a smattering of Scotus and Occam, bristle up with conceit, despise St. Jerome as a pedant because they do not understand him, and turn up their noses at Greek, Hebrew, and even Latin. "If you promise yourself a true knowledge of theology, without close study of languages,

¹ Cf. Luther, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 20, p. 97; Weim. ed., 30, 2, p. 258.

you deceive yourself completely.”¹ He condemns the excessive reverence paid to Aristotle and to human traditions. There is no need of trifling questions. Decree follows upon decree; and matters have come to this pass that Christendom depends, not on the plain words of Christ, but on the definitions of the schoolmen and the authority of the bishops such as they are. The recovery of the world to true Christianity is hopeless. Many holy men deplore this state of things.

Then he proceeds to defend certain passages attacked in the *Praise of Folly*, justifies his proceedings in the New Testament, the preference he gives to Greek manuscripts, and the superior purity of their text. He shows how much more exhaustive is his procedure than that of either Lorenzo Valla or Lefèvre d'Étaples. The latter merely made some notes on St. Paul's Epistles, whereas he is translating the whole of the New Testament according to the Greek manuscripts. The Greek text is given in the opposite column; the notes are separate, and in justification of his emendations. He should not fear to dedicate his labours to any bishop or cardinal, and does not doubt that van Dorp will be pleased with the book when he sees it.²

Erasmus corresponds with Leo X, beginning by complimenting him on his descent from Lorenzo de' Medici, and then proceeding to speak of his labours on the New Testament. The Pope is a musician: he is a lover of the fine arts. He builds the new basilica of St. Peter's, allowing the sale of indulgences for the cost thereof. As Tetzels sells the indulgences in Germany, Luther attacks their sale, not as a reformer, but as an orthodox member of the Church. It is possible to look on the architect of St. Peter's as a friend to toleration, for he provides the occasion which makes the monk begin to realize how far he is drifting from his own communion. Leo delights in the comedies of Ariosto and Bibbiena no less than in Erasmus's edition of the New Testament.³ He protects the Jews, and actually has a Jewish doctor. Erasmus singles out his tolerance as one of his chief merits.⁴ Though he signs the decree of the Lateran Council 1512-17, in favour of the censorship of books,

¹ *Opp.* IX, p. 11. Cf. his *Ratio* . . . 77, 79, 120, 122-5.

² Here I use Dr. Brewer's translation (Allen, II, 90).

³ On Leo's love of literature, cf. Albèri, 2nd series, III, 64, Cesareo, *Papa Leone X*, 119; Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, I, 266; Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter*, 8, 267 ff., 323-4; Masi, *Nuovi studi e ritratti*, I, 135, 211; Roscoe, *Vita e pontificato di Leone X* (Bossi), 7, 219; Ratti, *Lettere*, 13; Sanuto, I, *Diarii*, XXVIII, 517; Wolzogen, *Raffaël*, 98. Leo's love of literature and his patronage of it have been much exaggerated.

⁴ *Opp.*, III, p. 149; Allen, II, 79.

he is in no wise moved by the agnostic speculations of Pomponazzi in 1516 on the immortality of the soul. This papal Mæcenaz exercises a spell over Erasmus, who feels in his court "the sweetness of liberty, the riches of the libraries, the agreeable intercourse of so many learned men, the delightful conversations."¹ The scholar speaks for all his craft when he tells a cardinal, "Before I can forget Rome I must plunge into the river of Lethe." The patriotism of a Luther is unfelt. With insight Erasmus sees that "each has his country, it is the common country [of humanism]."² When Calixtus was menaced by Jacopo Piccinini, he retorted that he slept soundly because he had three thousand men of letters to support him, and for similar reasons Leo X slept soundly. The Pope was a believer in astrology: so too was Erasmus.³ Unlike most of his contemporaries, Leo takes a sober view of occurrences which they regard as miraculous.⁴ He accepts the dedication of a poem by Rutilius Namatianus, describing the teaching of Christianity as worse than the poison of Circe: the latter only transforms the bodies, whereas the former transforms the minds of men.

It is always difficult for the priest to understand—and control—the prophet. Innocent III had just succeeded in controlling Dominic and Francis of Assisi. Alexander VI naturally failed with Savonarola. Leo X corresponded with Erasmus because both were humanists, not because Erasmus was a reformer. The Pope did not want Erasmus: he received Luther. Erasmus and his scholars vanished: the Lutherans take their place. A cardinal at thirteen, a pope at thirty-seven, how could he grasp the standpoint of the Augustinian monk? Did Leo say, "Let us enjoy the papacy, since God has given it to us"?⁵ Did Voltaire, not Louis XIV, say, "L'état, c'est

¹ *Opp.*, III, p. 118, Feb. 8, 1512; Allen, I, 499.

² *Ibid.*, III, p. 158. Card. Riario to Erasmus, July 18, 1515; Allen, II, 117. Cf. Erasmus's letter to Ruzé, March 12, 1519, p. 298; Allen, III, 509. Cf. Leo X's account of Rome in his constitution for Rome University: "Roma, communis omnium patria" (Regesta, No. 5265). Cf. Card. Riario to Erasmus, July 18, 1515, *Erasmii Opera*, Ep. 180; Allen, II, 117; Gregorovius, 8, 285; Reumont, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom.*, III, 2, 144 ff.; Nolhac, *Érasme en Italie*, 65 ff.

³ Cf. Erasmus's letters, *Opp.*, III, 405, 427, and especially 305. In his letter of May 29, 1527, *Opp.*, III, Ep. 868, he praises the skill of the astrologer "qui ex astris norunt sibi dies et horas fortunatas eligere."

⁴ Raynaldus, *Annales ecclesiastici*, 1518, n. 1; *Not. des MSS. du Roi*, II, 598 ff.; Delicati-Armellini, 62.

⁵ Masi, *Studi*, I, 132, 158. Marino Giorgi, a Venetian ambassador, who was in Rome two years after Leo's election, records these words. The author of the *Vita Anonyma* in *Cod. Vatic.*, 3920, gives them. Cf. Prato, *Storia di Milano*, 405; Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 6, 132; Janus, *Der Papst und das Konzil*, 381.

moi"? Whether the Pope or the King uttered these *obiter dicta* is immaterial: what is material is that each accurately describes the attitude of the Pope and the King respectively. Indeed the Voltairian remark is applicable to Leo, who regarded himself primarily as a politician. Did he not tell the Imperial Ambassador in 1521 that he rejoiced more over the conquest of Milan than he had rejoiced over his election to the papal chair? ¹ It is in keeping with the character of his countrymen. "Let us be Venetians first," held Father Paolo Sarpi, "and Christians after." How warmly Gino Capponi approved the saying, "Praised be those who love their own country rather than the safety of their souls!" That Leo was an utter worldling is obvious. That he was a double-dealing worldling is not so obvious, nevertheless it was the fatal flaw in his character. Always changing, he remained the same faithful son of the Renaissance. Did he not in a moment of confidence inform Castiglione that he might safely believe his bare word, for he could equally deceive by Briefs and Bulls? ²

The Pope was just as much—and just as little—interested in the work of Erasmus on the New Testament as he would be in any other manuscript. The outlook of Erasmus differed by worlds. He considered the only hope for the restoration and reformation of religion rested in the study of the New Testament, which ought to be drawn rather from the true source than from its lakes and rivulets. He gives an account of his work to Leo, his obligations to Archbishop Warham, to whom England is so much indebted.³ It was to men like Warham that he looked for the reform that was to be accomplished by the Church, and with the Church. Pirkheimer, the burgher humanist, receives a similar note. In it Erasmus tells him he is engaged on his edition of St. Jerome, has corrected the whole of the proofs of the New Testament, and added notes; that he is so worn out with his work that has now lasted six months, he can hardly keep his health; and that he expects to go to England in March.³

In 1516 appeared at last the scholar's edition of the New Testament. With the exception of Lorenzo Valla, it had not occurred to the Italian humanists to employ the new learning to clear the source of Christian theology. In the North, though not in the South, Greek rose from the dead with the New

¹ Bergenroth, *Calendar of Letters*, etc., 1509-25, II, 264 n.

² Postscript to a Report of Castiglione's, dated from Rome, April 18, 1516, in the Gonzaga Archives, Mantua.

³ Cf. Erasmus to Leo X, Feb. 1, 1516, Ep. 29, p. 79 (Allen, II, 181).

Testament in her hand. Erasmus published it under the title of the *Novum Instrumentum*, and indeed it proved to be a new instrument of thought. Though it was printed at Bâle, it was the result of his stay in Cambridge. He may be reckoned the first of the great scholars of that university to whom students of the apostolic writings owe so weighty a debt. In a beautiful old cloister of Queens' College his study was situated. To the observer of the slow growth of toleration these rooms in the old tower are sacred. Doubtless his editing does not reach the level of Joseph Scaliger, Isaac Casaubon or Richard Bentley, but it merits the supreme distinction of being probably the first Greek edition that had ever appeared. "A shock thus was given," writes Mark Pattison, "to the credit of the clergy in the province of literature equal to that given in the province of science by the astronomical discoveries of the seventeenth century."¹ Truth was no longer a treasure to be discreetly hidden in a napkin. The *Novum Instrumentum*, like the *Novum Organum* of Bacon, appealed to facts, not to authority.

That Erasmus attached a deep purpose to his edition is quite clear from his introduction. "The viaticum [i.e. the provision for the journey] is simple and at hand for all. Only bring a pious and open heart imbued above all things with a pure and simple faith. . . . Other philosophies, by the very difficulty of their precepts, are removed out of the range of most minds. The Bible rejects no age, sex, condition. Salvation is not more common and left open to all than the doctrine of Christianity: it drives away none save him who drives himself away. . . . I fight absolutely the opinion of those who refuse to the common people the right to read the divine letters in the popular language, as if Christ had taught unintelligent mysteries, understood only by some theologians. . . . I would wish that women should read the Gospels, read the Epistles of Paul, and I would to God that these books were translated into all languages, so as to be known, not only by the Scotch and Irish, but by the Turks and Saracens. . . . To make them understood is surely the first step. They might be ridiculed by many, but some would take them to heart. I long that the husbandman should sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of his journey."² Similarly Lefèvre d'Étaples insists that every Christian ought to know his Bible, for does

¹ *Encycl. Britt.*, 9, 732.

² Paraclesis, in *Nov. Test.*, p. 2.

it not contain the words of his Father? It was the noble prerogative of the genius of Erasmus not to find out a private way of his own, a special method for the few, but to lead the multitude, at the cost of the death of many of his dearest hopes, to see that the way of true genius must in the last resort be the way for all.

In 1502 Cardinal Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros, Archbishop of Toledo, had undertaken the *Complutensian Polyglott*, containing the Old Testament in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and the New in Greek and Latin. The latter was first printed, but its publication was delayed until the Old Testament should be finished. The printer, Johann Froben of Bâle, the prince of publishers, heard of the labours of Ximenes, and applied to Erasmus to enable him to anticipate the edition of the Spanish scholar. It was a congenial application to Erasmus, and he hastily inspected the manuscripts he found at Bâle: these, however, were neither ancient nor good. He had also looked at manuscripts in Louvain, Paris and London. Three thousand three hundred copies of the first editions¹ were printed: a second edition appeared in 1519, a third in 1522, a fourth in 1527—this became the definitive text—and another in 1535. Like the work of the Christian humanists of the Italian Renaissance,² Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, the study of the ancient classics was at length a means to an end, and that end the service of Christ and His Church. Erasmus never served either better than by the edition he published on March 1, 1516, and dedicated to Leo X.³ To Fisher, the Bishop of Rochester, he mentions the applause which his edition has drawn from scholars and theologians, and the first great offers made to him by prelates and princes. St. Jerome will appear next at the Frankfort sales. He sends by Peter the One-eyed to Archbishop Warham, four volumes of the letters, which he will readily lend to Fisher. He had arrived at St. Omer, intending to cross to England, but has been attacked by a slight fever. After he had left Bâle, and was preparing to pass through Lorraine, he encountered large bodies of soldiers: he would gladly see an end of war.⁴

¹ On the care he took with these editions, cf. his letter to Barbirius, Sept. 23, 1521, p. 663. On his criticism of the Vulgate cf. his *Ratio* . . . , p. 77 ff.

² On Erasmus's opinion of the debt of Germany to Italy cf. his letter to Botzheim, Ep. 1, p. 2 (Allen): "Rodolphus Agricola primus omnium aurulam quandam melioris literaturæ nobis invexit ex Italia."

³ Pref. in *Nov. Test.* (to Leo): "Novum (ut vocant) Testamentum, universum ad græce originis fidem recognovimus, idque non temere neque levi opera, sed adhibitis in consilium compluribus utriusque linguæ codicibus."

⁴ Allen, II, 244 (June 5, 1516).

He wrote a series of Latin paraphrases of all the books of the New Testament except the Revelation of St. John the Divine: the portion with much theology in it is that on St. Mark. These were meant to bring home to the sixteenth-century reader the substance and thought of the several books in a form making a ready appeal to his mind.¹ No one, not even Wyclif, with his translation of the Scriptures, contributed so much to the Englishman's knowledge of the Bible as these *Paraphrases of the New Testament*. They diffused the opinions of the author of the *Praise of Folly* on such matters as fasts and feasts, the monastic life, the worship of relics and the like. Authority received rude blows from comments like those on Matthew xvi. 18, "Upon this rock I will build my church." The author expresses his surprise that these words should be applied exclusively to the Roman pontiff, "to whom they undoubtedly apply first of all, seeing that he is the head of the Christian Church; but they apply, not to him only, but to all Christians."² On Matthew xvii. 5, "Hear ye him," he points out that "Christ is the only teacher who has been appointed by God Himself. Such authority has been committed to no theologian, to no bishop, to no pope or prince." Authority is to be purified, not destroyed. Too many bishops forget that they are pastors "called to feed, not to shear the sheep." The spiritual character of ecclesiastical power is paramount.³ Scholarly acumen is evident in the reference to the language of the New Testament, in the comment on Acts x. 36, that "the Apostles learned Greek, not from the orations of Demosthenes, but from the common conversation." It was not a little difficult for the husbandman, the weaver and the traveller to distinguish between text and paraphrase, between St. Matthew and St. Erasmus. The blending of the two renders intelligible the belief not only in England but in Europe, that the Bible was composed as a pamphlet on the reforming side. It was, in fact, directed from its origin, the only origin at least that the ordinary man knew, against the Pope and the Romish Church.

He tells Henry Bullock, who may have attended his Greek class in 1511,⁴ that he is glad to find that his New

¹ In May 1517, Beatus wrote to Erasmus: "*Paraphrasis apostolicarum epistolarum tua cupidissime expectatur*" (Allen, II, p. 538). Cf. Epp. 745, 755, 937 (Allen).

² Cf. *Paraph.*, p. 93, and the *Colloquies*.

³ Cf. *Paraph.*, pp. 873, 933. Cf. Eph. vi, 1, p. 988: "*Auctoritatem temperet charitas, ne qua exeat in tyrannidem.*"

⁴ Allen, II, 313. On Bullock cf. Mullinger, I, pp. 498, 512 and 571.

Testament is applauded at Cambridge, although he has heard from very credible authority that there is a college there which has put out a decree that the book shall on no account enter its precincts. Think of men so absurd as to condemn a work they had not read, or reading could not understand. They had only heard, over their cups, or in knots in the market, that a new work had appeared which was to pluck out the eyes of the theologians like crows. They pretend that nothing of the kind ought to be attempted without consent of a General Council. May he not restore what they have depraved? He insists on this absurdity, and the discrepancies in the citations of the New Testament, meeting the objections against a new version. He thinks that even a General Council might overlook things, especially if they were not of necessity unto salvation. So they intend at all hazards to retain their mumpsimus! They vociferate, "O earth and heaven, Erasmus has corrected the Gospels!" He produces instances of new editions of parts of Scripture. Aristotle has lost none of his authority by his modern translators, nor Hippocrates and Galen by the labours of Cope. If grammar does not make a theologian, the absence of grammar does not.

Moreover, in the present Lateran Council it has been decreed that any book may be published by the consent of the ordinary. That approbation he has from the Bishop of Bâle and the Archbishop of Canterbury. He mentions various scholars who had expressed their satisfaction with the work. Are not dunces ashamed to revile what their own Chancellor, the Bishop of Rochester, has applauded? He sends a copy of the two papal letters in his favour. Ammonius has entrusted them to Pace, who is now ambassador with the Emperor Maximilian, to forward them to Maximilian at Bâle. Last winter he sent one volume to Leo X.

Are they afraid lest the book should entice their scholars and empty their lecture-room? Thirty years ago nothing was taught at Cambridge except Alexander's *Parva Logicalia*, some scraps of Aristotle, and the *Questiones* of Duns Scotus. In process of time improved studies were added, including mathematics, a new Aristotle, a knowledge of Greek letters. What has been the consequence? The university can now hold its head with the highest, and has excellent theologians. Of course they must study the New Testament with greater attention, and not waste their time as heretofore on frivolous squabbles. He could name certain theologians who had never so much as read the Scriptures, or even turned over The

Sentences or anything else. He can cheerfully await the judgment of posterity.¹ As the Eternal Edict of 1667 lay on the table before him, De Witt's cousin, Vivien, the Pensionary of Dort, stuck the point of his penknife through it. "What are you doing?" inquired the Grand Pensionary. "I am trying to see what steel can do against parchment," came the reply. Erasmus believed in parchment, though the parchment was that of learning, but now and then he was tempted to try the steel of abuse. The years that followed the edition of his New Testament brought much disappointment to the scholar. He saw the steady and peaceful growth of reform beginning to be broken by men who thought more of steel than of parchment. Shut out by temperament from the whirl of active life, his mind rose superior to his frail body and moved habitually on the plane of great thoughts and bold ideas. The ills of the day—in Church and State—his diagnosis reduced to one cause, and that was ignorance, ignorance of what Christ taught, ignorance of what the Bible meant, ignorance of what great contributions the Greek and the Latin had made to the education of the human race. These evils could all be cured by knowledge, and it was his duty to supply it. In spite of his disappointment, he never lost his belief in the growth of knowledge. Therefore he poured forth his editions of the Fathers, either wholly or in part: Jerome again, Austin, Cyprian, Arnobius, Hilary, Chrysostom, Irenæus, Ambrose, Lactantius, Basil, and, during the last months of his life, Origen. The sword and the stake had still many victims to claim, but he maintained his firm trust in parchment. Erasmus, like Jeremy Bentham, found not a doctrine but a method. The raileries of the *Praise of Folly* and the *Colloquies* proved mortal blows to the old mediæval theology, but the edition of the sacred text and the editions of the Fathers were one day to be the model of the new theology.

In the *Paraphrases*, as in the *Enchiridion*, Erasmus emphasizes the place of faith in the life of the Christ. "I call the Gospel," he lays down, "the justification by faith in Jesus the Son of God, that the Law has promised and pre-figured."² The Gospel is "justification by faith in Jesus." It is clear that Erasmus, like Lefèvre d'Étaples, anticipated Lutheran doctrine.³ As a commentary on the walk of the two disciples to Emmaus he asks, "What does Christ ask from his own but faith? . . .

¹ Allen, III, 321, Aug. 22 (?) 1516. Here I use Dr. Brewer's translation.

² *Paraph.*, Rom. i. 13, p. 780; Luke xviii. 35, p. 425.

³ Lefèvre d'Étaples, III, Quadr., f. 102, 166.

Through his faith they are justified.”¹ “When Christ forgives sins he speaks neither of our satisfactions nor our works. . . . It suffices to come to the feet of Jesus.”² “All that is bestowed on us for the good life, by Divine goodness, is bestowed on us by faith alone. . . . We are only the organ of the Divine power which works within us.”³ Weakness lies in the will of man: through it sin entered the world, leaving us able to desire good, not to do it, able to see God for a moment, not to possess Him for ever.⁴ He is clear that when men would do good evil is present with them, and he powerfully develops this dualism in man’s nature.⁵ Marsilio Ficino wrote his *De Religione Christiana* to prove that religion is natural to man, and in it he makes one of the earliest of the Renaissance attempts to reconcile science and theology. Erasmus is no less clear that the law of nature inspires us with at least the elements of truth and morality, and he does not hesitate to write “Nonne quod naturæ ratio dictat, idem et sacra Lex jubet.”⁶

To the Nominalist theology the intellect comes first: to Erasmus this place is reserved for natural reason. The law of nature and the law of grace were the same in kind: the day was to come when Erasmus saw how they differed in degree.⁷ In the meantime he perceives that Judaism has its appointed task to fulfil in teaching men the distinction between good and evil, between commands and prohibitions. The Law created an elaborate discipline for the purpose of fighting sin,⁸ constraining men to use their powers.⁹ The code given to Moses, though it commanded and threatened men, contained the germ of progress, for did it not foreshadow the Messiah? The Prophets and the Psalmists foretold Him. The Law of Works, which with Erasmus always means the observance ordered by Moses, prepares the way for the Law of Faith: it is simply a stage in the long journey which was one day to lead men to Christ Himself. To Erasmus there is no antithesis, save an historical one, between Law and Faith.¹⁰ To him the opposition

¹ *Paraph.*, p. 473.

² *Ibid.*, Mark ii. 12, p. 173, on the healing of the paralytic.

³ Cf. *Paraph.*, Matt. iii. 11, p. 15; iv. 23, p. 22; Luke i. 46; Eph. ii. 4, p. 976; iii. 20, p. 980; 1 Pet. i. 2, p. 1083, and 2 Pet. i. 3, p. 1101.

⁴ *Paraph.*, Rom. vii. 20-5.

⁵ *Paraph.*, James i. 15, p. 1121. Cf. *Hyperaspistes*, pp. 1401 and 1403.

⁶ *Paraph.*, p. 888. Cf. *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1463.

⁷ *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1403.

⁸ *Paraph.*, Gal. iii. 9, p. 954; Rom. vii. 7-10: “Neque enim Lex auctor peccandi, sed index peccati” (p. 798).

⁹ *Paraph.*, Gal. iii. 22, p. 955.

¹⁰ *Paraph.*, Rom. iii. 2, p. 785: “Lex . . . gradus est ad evangelicam

between Law and Faith is definitely doctrinal. The Law has not been abolished: the Gospel transforms it and completes its work. Like Pico and Reuchlin, Erasmus looked around history and saw everywhere the principle of continuity. He wishes to reform the Schoolmen; he does not want to destroy them.¹ To him as to Ficino, Christianity is in the last stage of its development. The Jew contributed his contemplative genius, the Greek his philosophical genius, the Roman his political genius. There was not any contradiction between Christianity and antiquity.² The wisdom of Greek and Roman, combined with the works of the Law, finds a natural meeting-place in the Gospel.³ Petrarch regards Cicero as his father, Virgil as his breviary. To Erasmus they are valuable because they are *animæ naturaliter Christianæ*. There is not only continuity, there is also unity, which is realized in the Incarnation. Truth is contained in texts: it is also embodied in Him Who is the Life of men. In fact Erasmus is quite clear there has been one divine event towards which the whole world has moved. His reading of the records of the past obliges him to look on man as a worker with God. His historical mind obliges him to see the bearing of the past on the present. Unlike the Schoolmen, Descartes, and the Positivist system of the nineteenth century, he does not trust to reason working on experience for a scheme of thought.

The facts of life told the scholar plainly that there was duality in the soul of man, that evil and good were continually striving for the mastery. For him there was—and there could be—no dualism in his outlook on life. Knowledge was destined to grow from more to more, and similarly there was to be more reverence within us. Mind and soul were to be in accord, making a complete unity: a synthesis, not a separation, is the aim of his method. He knows how large a share faith takes in Christian life: he also knows how large a share love takes. As there is no tree without root, so there is no faith without

. . . doctrinam." Heb. xiii. 9, p. 1196: "Non aliud docuit lex mosaica, quam docet Evangelium, sed aliter."

¹ *Opp.*, III, 188: "Non quod optem hoc theologiæ genus, quod hodie receptum est in scholis, obliterari; sed quod accessione veteris versæque literaturæ, cupiam et locupletius reddi. . . . Neque enim hinc vacillabit sacrarum litterarum aut theologorum auctoritas, si quædam posthac emendata legentur . . . , aut rectius intelligentur." This is in a letter from Erasmus to Wolfgang Capito, Feb. 26, 1517 (Allen I, 487).

² *Paraph.*, Acts xv. 2, p. 726: "Non abrogat, perficit"; Luke xvi. 17, p. 414: "Est legis non abolitio, sed absolutio"; Rom. vii. 4, p. 798.

³ *Ibid.*, Matt. xix. 8, p. 103: "Evangelica doctrina renovat ac perficit naturæ sinceritatem."

fruit.¹ "The sap," he holds, "that Christ infuses in us must reveal itself by flowers."² That is, there is no opposition between faith and works, for the one means the other. Justification to Erasmus is justification by faith, which issues in holiness of life: a justification, however, isolated from works is a conception alien to his whole tone of thought. "It is not only he who speaks of justice is just, but he who practises it in his life and habits."³

As Erasmus reconciles faith and works, so he reconciles nature and grace. We are free before grace⁴ for we can accept it or reject it, though our virtues are the work of God. Grace is offered to us, and by our free will we receive it.⁵ If we practise good works for the glory of God, God will requite us. His solution is plainly Austinian. "Those who are the farthest from Pelagius attribute the utmost to grace, almost nothing to free will, without, however, suppressing it; they deny that man can will good without a particular grace, that he can take it in hand, make progress, and accomplish it completely without the essential and continual help of His grace. Their view seems right to me."⁶ Man, however, must co-operate with God. The gift of grace is God's, but man's share is the reception of it.⁷ Man is not condemned save by his own fault.⁸ The will of man remains in the last resort incorporating itself with the Divine action: it is a reality, not a sheer illusion, making for liberty, not for serfdom.⁹ It realizes the One in the Many. "Where there is no unity," Erasmus is persuaded, "there is no Church."¹⁰ For him Christ forms the joining force, making all men realize their oneness. The more we know about Him the more we feel our union with His spirit, and every Christian ought therefore to read his Bible. True some may misuse their reading, nevertheless "must we chase the bee from the flowers because now and then a spider appears

¹ *Paraph.*, James ii. 19, p. 1126: "Evangelica lex caritatis lex est."

² *Ibid.*, Rom. vi. 11, p. 795; James ii. 18-9, p. 1128; ii. 9, 10, 14; 1 John iii. 14, p. 1153.

³ *Ibid.*, 1 John iii. 7, p. 1152.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Matt. xx. 15, p. 108; Mark x. 52, p. 241.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Matt. xx. p. 108; Heb. vi. 10, p. 1175; James iv. 6, p. 1135.

⁶ *Diatrise*, p. 1224. Cf. *Hyperaspistes*, pp. 1338, 1358, 1500-1. On p. 1358 he says, "Ego cum Augustino gratiam jungo cum libero arbitrio."

⁷ *Paraph.*, 1 John v. pp. 44-5, 548: "Qui non attrahitur, ipse in vitio est, quia in se subducit attrahere volenti. . . . Donum est Dei, sed vester est conatus."

⁸ Cf. *Paraph.*, Rom. ix. 6, p. 807: "Nemo damnatur nisi sua culpa: nemo servatur, nisi Dei beneficentia."

⁹ *Paraph.*, Rom. viii. 20, 22, p. 803.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Acts i. 14, p. 664.

on them?"¹ There are, Erasmus admits, in the sacred record obscurities of words and of things. The Bible did not fall from Heaven like the image of Diana at Ephesus: its different books show plainly the traces of the different circumstances and stages of culture in which they had their origin. The historical sense of Erasmus is awakened, and he sees differences and developments of doctrine both in the Old Testament and the New. In point of fact the Bible is not primarily a revelation of supernatural knowledge at all: it is the revelation of God Himself working in history for the redemption of mankind, progressing from Genesis to Moses, from Moses to the Prophets, from the Prophets to Christ, and beyond Him. The comparative point of view appears, for example, in the remark that St. Paul wrote for the Jews who opposed "the legal rules of Mosaic law in the Gospel. . . . It is probable that he would have spoken quite differently had he lived in our age."² Growth of doctrine began with St. Paul, continues in the Fathers, and Doctors follow in their train.³ One passage, however, shows his distress at the progress of unbelief.⁴

Truth has changed, has developed through the ages. God inspired holy men of old, and His influence is at work in His Church. Inspiration is not now, however, a sufficient criterion of truth, for individuals claim it, interpreting the Bible in many different ways. The test of conscience, however enlightened by the Spirit, is a subjective one. Erasmus requires an objective one, and it is at hand in his method. Paul, Irenæus, Cyprian, Origen, Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas—all contribute their share to grasping the mind of God. Their authority is not meant, however, to crush freedom of thought. Truth is not in one of them: it is in what is common to all of them. Their agreements, not their disagreements, are vital, and in their joint consent Erasmus finds the firm basis of our action, which in time becomes general belief. The Renaissance to him was not a pure reaction against the Middle Ages; it was rather a stage in the evolution of a long process. He, however, discards the dry form of the syllogism in favour of the lively form of exposition: he substitutes analysis in place of the divisions and subdivisions of the

¹ Preface to the Paraphrases of the Gospels.

² Cf. his dedicatory letter to Grimani, Nov. 13, 1517 (Allen, III, 136), on the Epistle to the Romans, and to Everard de la Marck, Feb. 5, 1519 (Allen, III, 480), on the Epistle to the Corinthians.

³ *Paraph.*, 1 Cor. iii. 1, p. 866; viii. 7, p. 886, p. 967; Pref. in Hilarius (1522) *Epist.*, p. 693.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1 Cor. xv. pp. 906, 911.

schoolmen. In his *Ratio . . . perveniendi ad veram theologiam* he lays down plain exegetical rules. He points out the necessity of classifying passages from the Bible, e.g. those received by all, those contested, and those characterized as apocryphal.¹ Much as he admires the synoptists, his warmest regard is reserved for the fourth Gospel.²

Erasmus has a reverential attitude to the past: it has handed down truth to the present. He is just as willing as the Schoolmen to receive the teaching of the Church. Unlike the preceding generation, he exhibits no interest in such matters as the superiority of the Pope to a General Council, and vice versa. He is well aware that it is the practice which produces the theory, and not the theory the practice. The prehistoric savage knew nothing of the laws of gravitation when he launched the first canoe; and men conversed with one another ages before the need was felt for formulating the laws of language. It is the practice, then, which produces the theory, though the theory generally reacts on the practice which produced it.³ Erasmus saw that there is a certain intellectual element in religion from the very first: there are a few essentials of knowledge without which no man can become or be a Christian. But as for the great mass of doctrine, it comes second both in point of time and importance: the order is still that of the Master, "If any man will do His will he *shall* know of the doctrine." Erasmus is quite clear that it is not "dogma which gives birth to faith, but faith gives birth to dogma."⁴ Nevertheless, with Pico della Mirandola and Lefèvre d'Étaples he firmly believes—and nothing ever shook this conviction—that the Church has the right to define dogma, to authorize its definitions, and to order the permanent recital of the Apostles' Creed. "The Church," he is amply convinced, "never goes wrong in whatever pertains to salvation. . . . I believe with the utmost implicit confidence what I read in the Bible and the Apostles' Creed, and I seek nothing beyond that."⁵

"Humorous people there are," Erasmus quietly points out, "who believe in the infallibility of the Pope on condition that they can submit it to their own infallibility."⁶ In the *Collo-*

¹ Erasmus, *Apologia rejiciens quorundam . . . rumores natos ex dialogo . . . qui Jacobo Latomo inscribitur*, March 28, 1519, *Opp.*, IX, p. 88.

² Cf. Budé, *De Asse*, V, f. 158: "Is not the Gospel of John none other than the almost perfect sanctuary of truth?"

³ Cf. *Opp.*, III, p. 1727; *Opp.*, Ep. 345.

⁴ *Ratio* . . . , p. 91.

⁵ Erasmus, *Apologia rejiciens quorundam . . . rumores*, p. 88.

⁶ *Ratio* . . . , p. 90.

quies he maintains that "what comes from the authority of a General Council is a celestial oracle, and it has a weight, if not equal to that of the Gospels, at least equivalent."¹ He holds that all the laws of the popes oblige, that no one can abrogate what the pontiff decrees, that St. Peter has received authority to establish new laws, that St. Paul and the other Apostles have in the Churches the places assigned to them by St. Peter or Christ, that the successors of St. Peter exercise the same power as St. Peter himself. It is true that they can abuse their power, that they can establish unjust or evil laws, irreconcilable with the inward liberty of the Spirit. What does it matter? "The liberty of a Christian is," according to the *Colloquies*, "not to be able to do what he wishes, but to be always ready to do, in the fervour of the Spirit, with a light and contented heart, what he is ordered, rather as a son than as a slave." If the Renaissance tended towards individualism, certainly Erasmus limited this individualism. His negative work, his criticisms of the corrupt state of religion, prepared the way for the Reformation. His positive work is different: it is a distinction sometimes overlooked. In spite of unreasonable commands, the bishop remains a father in God: he is not a tyrant. The humanist takes trouble to emphasize the fact that Jesus said "Feed my sheep": He did not say thy sheep, but mine. "*Pastor es, non dominus*," so he teaches in his *Ratio . . . perveniendi ad veram theologiam*.²

There is, then, an obvious difference between temporal and ecclesiastical authority: the latter is essentially spiritual, and therefore concerned with spiritual matters. Matters not dealing with faith are open to criticism, e.g. the case of the Forged Decretals. The secular authority commands the body: the ecclesiastical appeals to the soul, the conscience. When the Church states the way of salvation she is discharging her manifest duty. She exceeds her functions when she imposes annates and tithes, places herself above princes, makes peace or war, and fulminates anathemas on behalf of her worldly interests. The pride of theologians is largely responsible for the use of force.³ The Church was built on love, and by love she maintained herself. She was not built on force, and by force she ought not to maintain herself. Does truth grow through the employment of sudden decrees, of condemnations, of pains and penalties? We terrify and threaten, Erasmus

¹ Cf. G. F. Pico, *De fide et ordine credendi* . . . , Theor. XV, p. 298.

² P. 86.

³ *Ratio* . . . , pp. 102, 105, 110.

perceives: we constrain, we do not teach; we drag men by force, we do not lead them. The outcome "is that the religion of Christ which was everywhere flourishing is everywhere declining."¹

The scholar studies the method of St. Paul. "If he speaks to the Athenians, he does not present himself to them as a censor who accuses them, but as a stranger who seeks instruction. Does he write to the Romans? He recommends them not to reject, but to welcome the feeble in faith, to receive them as Christ has received them. Does he write to the Corinthians? He advises them to seek what is useful to their brethren, not to themselves. Does he write to the Galatians? He does not blame them for having preferred a pseudo-apostle to him, but writes as a mother who is distressed and disquieted by the idleness of her child. Has this mildness been a danger? Has it not been a force and a power on behalf of truth? "This mildness has renewed the world, has done what no harshness could do."¹

About 1489 Erasmus told Cornelius Gerard that by their science and their life Jerome and Austin stood at the head of the Church. In his *Ratio . . . perveniendi ad veram theologiam* he particularly eulogizes the *De Doctrina christiana* of St. Austin, and, like most other humanists, e.g. Lefèvre d'Étaples, places the *Celestial Hierarchy* of Dionysius the Areopagite near it, though he disbelieves in its authenticity. In 1520 he published his edition of Cyprian: in 1522 he edited Hilary and the Commentary of Arnobius on the Psalms. In the preface to his edition of Hilary he takes occasion to remark that the intellectual life of catholicism is not bound up with either Aquinas or Scotus. In 1525 he translated treatises of Chrysostom. In 1527 appeared the works of Ambrose, in 1528 those of Irenæus; in 1529 a treatise of Lactantius, and during these very years his ceaseless activity revises and annotates an edition of Austin. The two Fathers who absorbed his thoughts were Jerome² and Origen,³ especially the former. In 1512⁴

¹ *Ratio . . .*, p. 100.

² Cf. Erasmus's letter to Jan Batt, Ep., Dec. 11, 1500, p. 321 (Allen): "Hieronymi in quem commentarios paro." Cf. his letters in *Epist.*, 321, 326, 328, etc.

³ Erasmus to Colet, Ep., Dec., 1504, p. 405 (Allen): "Origenis operum bonam partem evolvi."

⁴ Cf. J. Bade to Erasmus, Ep., May 19, p. 515 (Allen). On his familiarity with Jerome's letters cf. Ep. 22, June 1489. Cf. also Ep. 27, 53, 141 (Allen). On his editions of Jerome's writings cf. Epp. 138 9, 141, 149, 245, 270, 326, 396, 531 (Allen). On his care in examining MSS. of Jerome's writings, cf. Epp. 264, 270-1, 273, 281, 332 (Allen). Cf. *Opp*, III, 1, 149; Hartfelder, *Erasmus*, 129 ff.

and 1516 he published Jerome's *Letters* and some of his treatises, and the letters of Erasmus himself make it plain that from 1500 he was contemplating an edition of Jerome's works. In 1521, and from 1524 to 1526 he occupied himself with this Father.¹ With a pang Erasmus recalled that an angel had chastised Jerome for having read Cicero too often. Speedily he comforts himself with the thought that St. Paul spoke at the Areopagus with the insight of an Athenian. It is a thousand pities that Jerome held such a view: still, the Renaissance scholar felt the theologian simply must know his Homer and Virgil, his Sophocles and Theocritus, and his Cicero. Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle—they are all precursors of Christ. "When I read certain passages of these great men," Erasmus confesses, "I can scarcely avoid saying: Holy Socrates, pray for us."² In Cicero he feels a divine afflatus. "I cannot," he said, "read his books on Old Age, Friendship, and Duties without stopping and kissing the manuscript. . . . He is inspired." Knowledge unites man more closely to religion, for Christ is the crown of human progress.

In 1532 Erasmus published his edition of Basil,³ and in the last year of his life he was hard at work on fragments of Origen. He had long been attached to the seminal mind of this last Father. In 1518 he told Johann Eck that a page of Origen pleased him more than ten of Austin.⁴ Closely as he studied the Fathers, he makes his reserves. "Homines errant," he remarks, "quædam ignorabunt . . . nonnulla dederunt . . . vincendis hereticis."⁵ Here is the record of the days and nights of the scholar spent in finding manuscripts, collating them, penetrating the precise meaning of words, establishing the exact accuracy of facts. Truly he could say "Exegi monumentum." The object is to enrich Christian thought by the Renaissance, and, unlike the Italians, to accomplish the purification of the Renaissance by Christian thought.⁶ That is,

¹ Cf. Erasmus to Egnatius, *Epist.*, Oct. 3, 1525, p. 894.

² *Colloquia familiaria*, I, 683 (Le Clerc). Cf. Amiel, *Érasme*, 337 f.; Horawitz, *Über die colloquia des Erasmus v. R.* in *Hist. Taschenb.*, VI, 6, 55 ff.

³ Erasmus to Colet, *Ep.*, Sept. 13, 1511, p. 467 (Allen): "Cœpi vertere Basilium in Hesiām."

⁴ "Plus me docet christianæ philosophiæ unica Origenis pagina, quam decem Augustini."

⁵ "Apologia rejiciens quorumdam . . . rumores natos ex dialogo . . . qui Jacobo Latomo inscribitur," March 28, 1519, *Opp.*, IX, p. 88. Cf. *Ratio* . . . , pp. 127, 131-2.

⁶ Cf. John Colet's letter to Erasmus, June 1517 (Allen, II, 559): "Nihil melius pro hac brevi vita quam ut sancte et pure vivamus ac quotidie dare operam ut purificemur et illuminemur et perficiamur. . . . Meo judicio nulla alia via assequemur quam ardenti amore et imitatione Jesu."

Erasmus is more than a mere brain because his is a beautiful soul, and one naturally Christian. His editions embody not only an encyclopædia of knowledge, but also a Christian ideal of life. Antiquity is his life because it embodies life. His object is not the culture of man: it is a cult for man. For the resurrection of Antiquity meant the resurrection of Christianity. *Μηδὲν ἄγαν*, "Nothing in excess," was as characteristic of Erasmian as of Hellenic wisdom. It was the work of Erasmus to reconcile faith and reason, authority and discovery, obedience and inquiry.

Erasmus's patristic work was the work of a lifetime. As he told the Chapter of Metz, "I have laboured either to bring to the light of day very ancient authors, or to correct those whose text is corrupt."¹ What has the result been? Improved texts, exact translations, and learned commentaries have appeared, and with them the idea that mediæval thought is not sufficient. Men must go behind the schoolmen to the sources, they must read Greek and Hebrew for themselves, and see, not what the authority of the Church tells them is in the Bible, but what is actually in it. Rightly he terms his edition of the New Testament *Novum Instrumentum*: his editions of the Fathers were *Nova Instrumenta*. All inaugurated a method in thought of the most far-reaching significance. This method, as Pitt said of Butler's *Analogy*, raised as many problems as it solved. A synthesis as well as his method was an urgent need. Meanwhile history, philology and theology in particular benefited from the discoveries of Erasmus: all learning was to benefit by his determination to be content with nothing less than the sources themselves. Erasmus, like Pico della Mirandola,² was resolved that nothing was to be taken at second hand. A similar conception is worked out in Guillaume Budé's remarkable book, *De Studio*,³ and in the preface to Lefèvre d'Étaples' *Libri Logicorum*.

The schoolmen explored the mystery of being of God as it were *in vacuo*: Erasmus threw out the great thought that the nature of God is best understood in the Incarnation. The reading of the Fathers obliges men to note the difference of their views on many matters on which the schoolmen needlessly dogmatized.⁴ It is likely that the practice of Confession originates in the "secret consultation" of the faithful with their

¹ *Opp.*, III, July 14, 1519, p. 469.

² Cf. his *Heptaplus*.

³ Cf. L. Delaruelle's illuminating study, *Guillaume Budé*, Paris, 1907, and his *Correspondance de Guillaume Budé*.

⁴ Cf. *Anotationes*, *Opp.*, VI, pp. 586, 589.

pastors. Why then make it an article of the faith as Peter Lombard does? If there are errors of detail in the sacred record, does it not show the danger of rigid theories of inspiration? If, as his beloved Jerome holds, St. Paul did not write the Epistle to the Hebrews, if there are doubts on the verses of the Three Witnesses in the First Epistle of St. John, if he did not, according to the Greeks, write the Apocalypse, if it is doubtful that St. Peter wrote the second Epistle attributed to him, or if St. James wrote his Epistle, or if St. John wrote two of his Epistles, is the text beyond criticism?¹ If it is true that the Apostles and Evangelists spoke the common tongue to the people, why cannot the faithful read the Bible in the language of their country? Moreover, he casts doubts on the Pseudo-Dionysius, and on the greater part of the writings attributed to St. Clement. He is not at all convinced that Papias is an historical character,² though he is quite sure of the historicity of the Acts of the Apostles.³

Freedom from rigid definition is the Erasmian ideal. Dogma there is and must be. There is no need to add fresh articles to the Creed. The Church says *Deus homo*: St. Anselm asks, *Cur Deus homo*? All that St. Anselm says is an approach to truth: no man, however, need take it as *de fide*. Thinkers propose, the Church imposes. Thinkers seek, the Church finds. They explain forms of truth: the Church crystallizes them into dogma. Erasmus felt with Montaigne that it is putting a high value on the opinions of a writer to burn men who do not see eye to eye with him. For knowledge, if found accurate, he had nothing but respect. Geography, history and philology—he looked askance at philosophy—were all of priceless worth to the theologian. “If, thanks to the works of history,” he writes, “we know not only the situation of the peoples among whom the recorded events happen, to whom the Apostles wrote, and also their origin, their manners, their institutions their genius, what light—let us say better—what life it puts into the study of the sacred texts!”⁴ The historic sense of the age is awake.

Controversy Erasmus disliked even when it served the cause of truth.⁵ War he disliked much more intensely, for he felt that it tended to harden men's views about other men and the

¹ *Novum Instrumentum*, pp. 433, 1023, 1079.

² *Ibid.*, p. 433.

³ *De Actis nulla unquam dubitatio*.

⁴ *Ratio* . . . , p. 79.

⁵ Cf. Paracletis in *Nov. Test.*, VI p. 3 (Le Clerc): “Vita est magis quam disputatio.”

causes on whose behalf they fought. Studies, he tells Servatius, are cold, but wars are hot. In those days of perpetual war it required no little courage to plead the cause of peace before princes. In 1504 he sketched for the benefit of the Archduke Philip the Fair a picture of the model prince, whose main duty was to preserve peace, and in 1511 the *Moriæ Encomium* inculcated the same precept. In 1514 he wrote a letter to one of his patrons, the brother of the Bishop of Cambrai, on the many iniquities of war, and neither Penn nor Barclay could add anything to the weight of the reasoning employed. In 1515, in a new edition of the *Adagia* and the *Institutio Principis Christiani* he discussed this problem. In 1516 he was appointed Councillor to Philip's son, Charles, who at the age of sixteen had become King of Spain, and in the *Institutio* he urged the prince's duty to maintain peace. In 1517 he met the new Bishop of Utrecht, Philip of Burgundy, with the *Querela Pacis undique gentium ejectæ profligatæque*, the Complaint of Peace cast forth from all lands.¹ He complains that "school contends with school, and, as though the nature of truth varied in different places, there are some doctrines which never cross the sea, the Alps, or the Rhine; nay, in the same university the logician is at war with the rhetorician, the lawyer with the divine. And still further, even in the same profession, the Scotist fights with the Thomist, the Nominalist with the Realist, the Platonist with the Peripatetic, so that they cannot agree even in the most minute particular, and often they will fight most desperately for a mere straw, until, in the heat of the discussion, they proceed from arguments to abuse, and from abuse to blows, and, if the affair is not settled with daggers and lances, they stab one another with pens dipped in poison, tear each other in pieces on paper, and brandish against one another's fame tongues armed with death. But none revolted me more than the monks, among whom there are as many factions as there are societies, while Dominicans dispute with Franciscans, Benedictines with the followers of St. Bernard; there are so many names, dresses, ceremonies, studiously diverse, so as to exclude all possibility of agreement, while each other is in love with itself, but condemns and hates every other. And yet nothing can be more utterly at variance with Christianity, whose founder is emphatically called the Prince of Peace." In 1522 he informs Carondelet that "the sum of our religion is peace and

¹ *Opp.*, IV, p. 625. Melanchthon wrote: "*Querela Pacis undique terrarum ejectæ.*" Cf. Schmidt *Melanchthon*, 23.

concord.”¹ The matters of the Gospel must be treated in the spirit of the Gospel. Many humanists desired peace and goodwill among men because it secured their own peace. Erasmus, on the contrary, loved peace and ensued it for its own sake. Like St. Austin, Dante, and Marsilius he ranks it as the highest early good.²

¹ *Opp.*, III, Jan. 6, 1522, p. 694.

² Cf. Erasmus to John Botzheim, Jan. 30, 1523 (Allen, I, 37) ; Erasmus to Antony of Bergen, March 14, 1514 (Allen, I, 551) and the *Adagia*.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY THOUGHT OF LUTHER

WHILE Erasmus was, in 1517, the intellectual king of Europe, an obscure Augustinian monk was revolving in his mind some of the problems that vexed the soul of the humanist. Luther had spent a depressing childhood.¹ At home there were labour and sorrow. His father, straitened as he was in circumstance, was rugged in appearance, clear-headed in mind, and ambitious in purpose. His mother possessed a timorous conscience and a superstitious piety. Her narrow means hardened her outlook on life, leaving little leisure for the intimacies of family life.² In such a home the lad missed that tender affection which so rapidly expands the heart and brain. For the least fault he was flogged till the blood flowed. Religion terrified him. Did he not hear the judgments of the Almighty, of the snares of the devil? In later life he entertained a lively recollection of the beatings he had received, and of the terrors he had experienced. Nor were these lasting impressions of childhood shaken by his school at Magdeburg, where he was with the Brothers of the Common Life. There too he was lonely, and this lonely condition continued till in 1501 he entered the University of Erfurt.³ His father had prospered, and the undergraduate at last found friends like Lang, Spalatin and Rubianus, and to them he showed that great humanity which characterized him.⁴

¹ He was born in the year 1483 and died in 1546. Cf. Köstlin-Kawerau, *Martin Luther*, p. 743, No. 16, the Berlin (1903) ed.

² On Luther's early life cf. his *Briefe*, I, 3 f., 29, 110, 390; 4, 237, 685; 5, 303; 6, 290 (Wette and Seidemann); *Werke*, Erl. ed., 20, 38; 64, 113; *Tischreden*, 4, 75 (Förstemann and Bindseil); *Corp. Reform.*, 27, 627 ff. Cf. also Kampschulte, *Universität Erfurt*, I, 60, 181, 233, 242; 2, 232; Jürgens, *Luth. Leben bis z. Ablassstreit*, I, 273.

³ On his student days cf. Jürgens, I, 302; Kampschulte, 2, 1, 12 f., 19; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 20, 38; 24, 24; *Tischreden* (F. and B.) 4, 543 f., 666 f., 686; *Colloquia* (Bindseil) 2, 14; 3, 100 f.; Luther's *Briefe* (W. and S.) 2, 5; 3, 228 f.

⁴ On his university friends cf. Köstlin, *Luther's Leben vor dem Ablassstreit*, 37-41.

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The death of a friend who passed away suddenly gave his thoughts a serious turn, and he entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt, July 17, 1505.¹ There he passed through a severe and prolonged religious crisis which deepened his sense of the power of sin.²

To the classics Luther thought that he owed little, confessing more than once, "I am only a barbarian."³ He is no intellectual Melchizedek. His debt, however, was greater than he imagined.⁴ Undergraduates imbued with the spirit of humanism had been in his circle, and he could not escape from their influence. He knew well the Latin poets and orators, placing Homer and Virgil first in his regards. Greek he did not commence till he commenced it with Philip Melancthon in 1518, and he was never familiar with it. Melancthon has been called the Preceptor of Germany: he was also the preceptor of Luther. He failed to give his friend that love of Greek which meant so much to him, for Luther to the last day he lived preferred the Vulgate to the Greek New Testament. Luther never read the bulk of the writers on history or tragedy. He possessed a bowing acquaintance with the *Phædo* of Plato: the *Ethics* and the *Physics* of Aristotle he knew, though he knew both in a Latin dress. In fact the only book he was familiar with in the original was the *Iliad*. The Promethean philosophy of rebellion was not in his thoughts. In his works he makes quotations from classical writers. There were then, as now, convenient books of reference, and he used the *Margarita philosophica* of Reisch, and the *Repertory* of Jodocus Windsheim.⁵ A quotation does not therefore necessarily prove intimacy or indeed any first-hand knowledge of the writer.⁶ Sympathy

¹ On the Saxon Augustinians cf. Denifle, *Luther und Lutherthum*, I, 351 ff., Blok, II, 564 ff.; T. Kolde, *Augustiner-Congregationen*, passim.

² Enders, *Briefwechsel*, I, No. 12 (Letter to Leiffer), April 15, 1516.

³ On Luther's teachers and studies cf. Oergel, *Vom jungen Luther*, 105-13, 131.

⁴ On his debt to the classics cf. *Rhapsodiæ et dicta quædam ex ore D. M. Luth. quæ Valent. Bav. . . comparavit*, I, 239; Ericeus, *Sylvula*, 175; Luther's *Briefe* (W. and S.) I, 22, 49, 54 f., 61 ff., 94, 98, 134 f., 138, 140 f., 426; his *Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), 3 ff.; *Colloquia* (B.), I, 262; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 25, 338 f.; *Op. exeg.*, 2, 301. Cf. also Geiger, *Johann Reuchlin*, 110 f.; Soden, *Beitr. z. Geschichte d. Reform.*, 48 ff. On Luther's attitude to Aristotle cf. Luther's *Briefe*, I, 35, 40, 54, 57, 59, 72, 84; *Op. exeg.*, XII, 197; *Op. varii argu.*, I, 74 f. Cf. also F. Nitzsch, *Luther und Aristoteles* (Kiel, 1883) passim; Denifle-Weiss, I², 526, 528; Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 118, 128-9. On the reformer and humanism cf. Paulsen, 204.

⁵ Ficker, *Anfänge reformatorischer Bibelauslegung-Römerbrief*, p. lix.

⁶ Cf. Schmidt, *Luther's Bekanntschaft mit den alten Classikern*, Leipzig, 1883; and Evers, *Das Verhältnis Luther's zu den Humanisten*, Rostock, 1897.

with the past is not in his nature. To some of us the Stoics are feeling after God if haply they may find Him : to Luther they are guilty of a supreme "piece of foolishness."¹ It is more intelligible that even in 1511 he regards Aristotle as a "relator of fables."² Erasmus, Zwingli and Melancthon were humanists, whereas Luther was primarily a theologian.

Nevertheless, in his early days Luther was in touch with the new thought. From 1511 to 1516 he examined carefully the commentaries of Lorenzo Valla on the Gospels, and the writings of Pico della Mirandola.³ He made extensive use of the lexicon of Aleander, and of the *Rudimenta hebraica* of Reuchlin, leaning to the side of the latter in his famous quarrel.⁴ To the books, especially the *Psalterium Quincuplex*, of Lefèvre d'Étaples he devotes marked attention, though he borrows from him his spiritual interpretation of the Psalms, turning them into the story of the life of Christ. In the second part of his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, the influence of Erasmus's edition of the New Testament is unmistakable.⁵ On August 24, 1516, he wrote to Spalatin that he was awaiting Erasmus's edition of the works of St. Jerome.⁶

Slightly changing the Voltairian remark we may place it in the mouth of St. Austin, "L'église, c'est moi," for these words represent the vast and permanent influence of the African thinker. Since the twelfth century his work had been eclipsed until Luther gave it fresh life. There was a new edition of his works in 1489, and another published at Bâle in 1509. From his Erfurt days to 1511 Luther is eagerly studying the *Confessions*, the *City of God*, the *True Religion*, and the *Christian Doctrine*. Neither the student nor his new master possessed a real knowledge of Greek, and to this day Christianity suffers from their ignorance. St. Austin, like Bishop Lightfoot, made his knowledge definite, giving it rigid form. Shades of meaning were as abhorrent to him as they were to Luther. Neither man could see that a thing is not the less real because its limits cannot be accurately defined. A hill is a hill and a plain is a plain though one cannot fix the point where the hill merges into the plain. George Eliot thought the highest lot was to possess definite beliefs, and such a lot was Luther's. Legality

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., IX, 25.

² *Ibid.*, IX, 23.

³ *Dict. super Psalterium*, IV, 183; *Annot. on St. Aug.*, IX, 5 and 27.

⁴ *Dict. super Psalterium*, III, 41, 88. Cf. his Letters to Spalatin, March, August, 1514.

⁵ Ficker, pp. 226, 241, 260, 293-4.

⁶ Enders, I, No. 19.

characterized the Austinian theology just as it came to characterize the Lutheran. John Austin allowed that the earthly sovereign might commit iniquity but not injustice. To St. Austin, God was an irresponsible Sovereign. To Luther this conception was a revelation which he embraced with enthusiasm. To him St. Austin is the very first of the Fathers.¹ For one thing the African doctor emancipated him from the influence of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, and from the sophisms of scholasticism.² With St. Austin he realizes the utter weakness of man's nature, the all-powerful action of grace, the significance of penitence, and the regeneration wrought by faith. Luther's theology, even in 1513, is more life than learning, more creed than comprehension, more narrow light than broad liberty.

In 1511 Luther went on a mission to Rome, and he saw the sights of the capital of Christendom with rapture.³ A change had passed over it of which he was unaware, though it was a change pregnant with far-reaching consequences on the work of his life. In 1492 Columbus had pierced the veil which concealed another continent from the eyes of men, and at once the process of transformation began. The centre of Europe had been all-important, whereas now the circumference of the continent assumed this pride of place. As sixteen centuries before Corinth and Athens had yielded their position to Rome and Ostia, so now Venice and Genoa, the home of Columbus, fell before the increasing sway of Cadiz and Lagos. It was the same in the north. The Atlantic immediately dominated the new situation, leaving the Baltic and the Mediterranean no more than inland lakes. Men had looked both ecclesiastically and commercially to the south, whereas now they were to look to the north and the west. Westward ran the course of commerce from Lübeck and Stralsund to Amsterdam and Bristol. The day of such enclosed basins as the Baltic, the Mediterranean—the Suez Canal, the decay of Turkish power, the industrial revival of Italy, and the French conquests have somewhat restored its position—and the Red Sea was over: the day of such marginal ones as the North and China Seas was to come. The historical importance of the Mediterranean and the Baltic was transitory, preparing the way for the Atlantic coast-line. The time taken in the task of preparation was

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., IX, 3 ff., 12.

² *Ibid.*, IX, 7, 10, 27.

³ Cf. Elze, *Luther's Reise nach Rom* (Berlin, 1899), 3, 45, 80; Hausrath, *Luther's Romfahrt*, 79; Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 99 ff., 101, and Köstlin, *Luther's Leben vor dem Ablassstreit*, 50.

enormous. From the day of the first journey of a Phœnician ship out through the Pillars of Hercules into the Atlantic to the voyage across it by a Genoese sailor, two thousand years elapsed. It was not, however, the Atlantic that really succeeded the Mediterranean: it was the broad world ocean. Significant as the Atlantic coast-line has been, its significance has been enhanced by the circumnavigation of Africa and South America, thereby binding the Atlantic with the World Ocean. The change has been from the Piræus to Ostia, from Venice to Genoa, from Lübeck to Hamburg, and from the Cinque Ports to Liverpool and Glasgow.

Venice is the seaport nearest to the heart of Europe. It was the easiest port by which the German merchants reached the sea, and it was the port by which the Levant merchants consigned their wares. Its position was at once altered by the discovery of the passage round the Cape, which forthwith reduced Venice to secondary rank. It fell to the lot of the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English, to gain the carrying trade of the world. The swiftness of the change was amazing. Priuli, in his diary, emphasizes the rapid decline of commerce in August 1506, that is, less than eight years after Vasco da Gama doubles the Cape. "It seems to me," he records, ". . . to note the special evils falling upon the city of Venice (by the loss) of the trade of the Germans, which was sorely missed these past years. And all proceeded on account of the Portuguese . . . and this change was reckoned the worst change the Venetian Republic could have."¹

The direction of the expansion has, on the whole, been constantly westward, as Bishop Berkeley indicates in his famous poem. In the south it moved with the Phœnician Sea to the Ægean, then to the Mediterranean, ending with its western shores. In the north it moved from the Baltic to the Northern Sea, and thence across the south. It would almost seem as if every great epoch of history had its own distinctive sea. The Greek had the Ægean, the Roman the Mediterranean. The Middle Ages had the Baltic and the North Sea. The Reformation had the Atlantic, and the cosmopolitanism of our day revels in the world ocean. It is hard to the last degree to conceive that in 1492 European man had been over 498,500 years on the earth, and was for the most part unaware of the existence of any continent save his own. The lack of swift means of communication, the railway, the

¹ Cf. H. Simonsfeld, *Der Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venedig und die deutsch-venetianischen Handelsbeziehungen*, Stuttgart, 1887.

motor-car, the oil-ship, and the aeroplane left Europe in the throes of birth-pains for a longer period than would now be absolutely necessary.

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 was felt only forty years afterwards in the then remote continent of North America, east and west thus beginning to realize the future intimacy of the union between them. It stirred the Portuguese navigators to a renewal of their efforts to reach India by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Every great movement, widening the geographical outlook of a people, at the same time widens their intellectual and economic outlook. The Crusades effected this important service for the Middle Ages, and the colonization of America effected it for the seventeenth and succeeding centuries. It is, indeed, difficult not to speak of such an event as the discovery of America almost exclusively in terms of geography. Yet the moment people completely realized there was another continent where the eagle of the Holy Roman Empire had never flown, that moment the whole structure of mediævalism was undermined. Columbus discovered a new world beyond, and Copernicus announced new worlds above. Scarcely any discovery of the nineteenth century, not even Darwin's, had such far-reaching effects as these two which made the Reformation inevitable.

What the Mediterranean had been in the past the Atlantic was to be in the future. The Papacy had been a Mediterranean Power. The Crusades had been Mediterranean wars. Athens, Rome, Constantinople, Venice and Genoa had been notable centres in the Middle Sea. The shores of Western Spain, Portugal, England and Germany were not lapped by its blue waves. The estuaries of the Mersey, the Clyde, and the Lagan resounded to the solitary cry of the bittern and the ripple of a stray fishing boat.

After the year 1492 the leadership of Europe shifted decisively from the south to the west. As Hegel put it, the crossing of the Alps by Julius Cæsar was an event of the same magnitude as the crossing of the Atlantic by Columbus. By both events new spheres were opened out for peoples ready to unfold capacities which were pressing for development. The shores of the Ægean and the Adriatic became what the Breton coast had long been. Cadiz, Lisbon, Cherbourg, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Plymouth and Bristol were the gates through which the busy traffic poured. The tie of Germany, from the tenth to the fifteenth century, had been with Italy, that is with the south. Henceforth the tie was with the north, and with this

transfer the rise of Prussia became possible. The two great naval European Powers in the present war unconsciously began their rivalry when the Atlantic assumed the place of the Mediterranean. The cities of Germany soon became aware how closely their fortunes were to be bound up with the success of the Reformation. The boll that has sent forth so many twigs and branches was once a twig itself.

Before the appearance of Sir Charles Lyell's *Principles of Geology* in 1830, science contemplated changes as catastrophic. Earthquakes, volcanoes, eruptions and floods were the phenomena ordinarily shaping the world. For these Lyell substituted glacial action, the slow denudation by rivers, subsidence and elevation and the like. In the history of mankind the point of view in Luther's day is similar. The attention of the observer was arrested by such a dramatic scene as the *Völkerwanderung*, or the irruption of the Turks into Europe. As in geology the mightiest forces are not the vast ones, but the steady, almost imperceptible action of the small powers. Nature never makes a leap. Luther could scarcely see that the horizontal divisions of the mediæval world were to be replaced by the vertical ones of the modern world. There was a contracted world for him. There is a world coterminous with nothing less than the boundaries of the globe for the generations after him.

Sometimes it seems amazing that in a land where the Reformation was shaking men on all sides, where society felt itself young, ardent and passionately eager to explore, such a pessimistic doctrine as justification by faith won adherents. It is more intelligible that it won them in the fourth century in the agony of a dying world. Some, perhaps subconsciously, felt that the labours of Columbus and Copernicus gave a death-blow to the Holy Roman Empire and the Mediterranean Church as they knew them, and their world was as much in its death-throes as the empire of the Cæsars. Besides, justification by faith made an enormous appeal to the growing feeling of individualism.

J. A. Froude realized the significance of the revolution when he wrote in matchless English: "For indeed a change was coming upon the world, the meaning and direction of which even still is hidden from us, a change from era to era. The paths trodden by the footsteps of ages were broken up; old things were passing away, and the faith and the life of ten centuries were dissolving like a dream. Chivalry was dying; the abbey and the castle were soon together to crumble into ruins; and all the forms, desires, beliefs, convictions of the old world were passing away, never to return. A new continent

had risen up beyond the western sea. The floor of heaven, inlaid with stars, had sunk back into an infinite abyss of immeasurable space : and the firm earth itself, unfixed from its foundations, was seen to be but a small atom in the awful vastness of the universe. In the fabric of habit in which they had so laboriously built for themselves mankind were to remain no longer.

"And now it is all gone—like an unsubstantial pageant faded ; and between us and the old English there lies a gulf of mystery which the prose of the historian will never adequately bridge. They cannot come to us, and our imagination can but feebly penetrate to them. Only among the aisles of the cathedral, only as we gaze upon their silent figures sleeping on their tombs, some faint conceptions float before us of what these men were when they were alive ; and perhaps in the sound of church bells, that peculiar creation of mediæval age, which falls upon the ear like the echo of a vanished world."¹

Momentous as the revolution in the world of nature, there was a revolution in the world of mind no less momentous. For in 1517 Luther was beginning to give expression to some of the theological conclusions he was painfully reaching. That very year the chief problem in the mind of Leo X was the securing of the Duchy of Urbino : he had the Papacy and he was enjoying it. After him might come the deluge. For a time the attitude of Martin Luther to the questions of the day was that of any member of his order, save that he had thought more deeply and read more widely. When he was preparing his lectures on the Psalms he consulted fathers like St. Austin and St. Jerome, exegetes like Isidore of Seville and Paul of Burgos, thinkers like Reuchlin and Lefèvre. At the age of twenty-nine he was acknowledged as one of the most learned of the Augustinians.² His attitude towards heretics is plain in his commentary on the Psalms, 1513-1515. He takes occasion to point out that "All heretics fell through excessive love of their own ideas. Hence it was quite possible what was false should appear to them true, and what was true, false. . . . Wisdom in its original purity can exist only in the humble and meek."³ His dislike of law and lawyers reveals itself both in this Commentary on the Psalms, and in that on the Epistle to the Romans.⁴ Before the year 1515 he delivered a sermon in which he empha-

¹ Froude, *History of England*, I, pp. 61-2, the 1900 edition.

² Melanchthon, *Corp. Reform.*, VI, p. 158.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 4, p. 83.

⁴ Ficker, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, II, pp. 272-3.

sizes belief and Christian feeling, asking for fewer pilgrimages and outward devotions.¹ His earliest thought is as Pauline as his latest.² In spite of his varied attitude to authority the student of his writings sees no break in his thought, no crisis in his ideas. In a sermon of August 1, 1516, he naturally appears as a defender of the authority of the body to which he belongs. "The Church," he holds, "cannot err in proclaiming the faith; only the individual within her is liable to error. But let him beware of differing from the Church; for the Church's leaders are the walls of the Church and our fathers; they are the eye of the body, and in them we must seek the light."³ Homer and Virgil begin to appear to him as the panegyrists of tyrannicide, and are in fact enemies of the human race.⁴ No illumination of the inner light, no works, however great, justify a separation from the Papacy.⁵ Nevertheless, he believes that the test of the truth of a doctrine is persecution. It is an easy transition to conclude that if he undergoes this test his view is therefore true. Two years later he is able to assure Staupitz,⁶ his learned Superior, "I shall hold the Church's authority in all honour," though he significantly adds, "I have no scruple, Reverend Father, about going forward with my exploration and interpretation of the Word of God." In the *Asterisci*,⁷ 1517, he affirms his belief in his own message: "If Christ and His Word be with me I shall not be afraid." In the *Resolutiones disputationum de indulgentiarum virtute*, 1517, he believes, "I am not alone, but truth is with me."⁸

Did the teaching of Wyclif and Hus modify the mind of the young priest? If it did so, the influence was unconscious. In his early life he denounced the Bohemian heretics and the Picards, as he frequently calls the Hussites. In his *Commentary on the Psalms* he simply regards them as heretics,⁹ and in his

¹ *Sermo præscriptus præposita in Litzka*, Werke, Weim. ed., I, 12 ff.

² Cf. Jundt, *Le développement de la pensée religieuse de Luther jusqu'en 1517*, p. 4.

³ Werke, Weim. ed., 3, p. 170.

⁴ *Op. in Psalmos*, V, p. 409.

⁵ Werke, Weim. ed., I, p. 69. Cf. Ficker, II, p. 88.

⁶ Cf. *Tischreden* (F. and B.) 3, 135, 160; 4, 604; *Colloquia* (B.) 1, 80, 271, 290; 2, 292; 3, 109 f., 129, 188; *Briefe* (W. and S.) 1, 116; 2, 624; 3, 470; 4, 114, 187; 5, 513, 680; 6, 101; *Briefwechsel* (Burk.), 195, 465 f.; *Op. exeg.*, 6, 296; Werke, Erl. ed., 39, 361 f. Cf. also Kolde, *Augustiner-Gregationen*, 274 ff.

⁷ Werke, Weim. ed., I, p. 306.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, p. 611.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 3, pp. 292, 334. Cf. W. Köhler, *Luther und die Kirchengesch.*, 168 ff. Contrast *ibid.*, 165-7, 226.

lectures on the Epistle to the Romans he singles out the Picard heresy as an instance of the wilful destruction of what is holy.¹ The excommunication of 1520, however, altered his point of view, and he was then enabled to perceive how much he held in common with Hus, and when he read his *De ecclesia* he upheld its teaching. Hence he writes in 1520: "There had always been a murmur of John Hus in many parts of the German land, and there still survives his memory, and, as it did not fade, I also took it up, and discovered that he was a worthy, highly enlightened man. . . . See all ye Papists and Romanists whether you are able to undo one page of John Hus with all your writings."² He was clever enough to take advantage of the feeling against Rome which the Bohemian reformer had assuredly stirred up, holding that "it was a tradition among honest people that Hus suffered violence and injustice." The belief that Hus was condemned by false judges he terms most robust, so that no Pope, or Emperor or University can shake it.³ Wyclif was a patriotic Englishman as well as an innovating theologian, and his follower Hus was as much a Bohemian as a Wyclifite. Savonarola, with his vision of a perfect State, was as anxious to reform the political outlook of Florence as to renew her theologically. There is a similarity between Luther and his two predecessors in their attitude towards ecclesiastical authority, but it is not sufficient to justify Erasmus from this standpoint, or from the general drift of his teaching, in asserting that if "what he has in common with Wyclif and Hus be removed, there would not be much left."⁴ The resemblance between Hus and Luther is strongly marked. Both belong to the peasant class, and both learnt from their early surroundings that invaluable gift for a leader of men, the art of moving the feelings and thoughts of the masses.⁵ Both trusted laymen,⁶ and both by the necessities of the case invoked the authority of the State.

¹ *Schol. Rom.*, p. 315; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 24, 25.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, pp. 590-1; Erl. ed., 7, p. 536 ff.; 24³, pp. 27-8; 65, p. 59 ff., pp. 80-1.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 185.

⁴ *Purgatio adv. epistolam non sobriam Lutheri*, 1532, p. 447 in *Erasmi, Opp.*, X (ed. Le Clerc), p. 1555: "Si tollas . . . quæ illi conveniunt cum I. Hus et I. Wiclevo aliisque nonnullis, fortasse non multum restabit, quo veluti proprio gloriatur." Cf. Lechler, *Joh. von Wiclif*, II, pp. 471-2; Bezold, *Zur Geschichte des Husitentums*, pp. 43-5, 50; Höfler, *Geschichtschreiber*, I, p. 385, II, p. 485.

⁵ Cf. *Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunsers für die einfältigen Laien*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., II, p. 84 ff. Cf. 94.

⁶ Cf. *Op. in Psalmos*, p. 658: "Alleluia vox est non divitum, non gloriosorum, non potentium, non sapientium, non justorum . . . sed pauperum, humilium, infirmorum, stultorum. . . . Pauperes enim evangelizantur."

In his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Luther still clearly thinks that the bishops and the Church possess an absolute right to condemn false teachers, however much the latter may "utter their foolish cry of 'we have the truth, we believe, we hear, we call upon God.' . . . Just as though they must be of God because they seem to themselves to be of God. No, we have an authority which has been implanted in the Church, and the Roman Church has this authority in her hands. Therefore the preachers of the Church, unless they fall into error, preach with assurance. But false teachers are pleased with their own words because they agree with their ideas. They seem to require the greatest piety, but are in reality governed by their own opinion, and their self-will."¹ "Whoever declares he is sent by God must either give proof of his mission," he concludes in true Paleyean spirit, "by wonders and heavenly witness, as the Apostles did, or he must be recognized and commissioned by an authority sent by Heaven. In the latter case, he must stand and teach in humble subjection to such authority, ever ready to submit himself to its judgment; he must speak what he is commissioned to speak, and not what his own taste leads him to imagine. . . . Anathema is the weapon which lays low the heretic."

In this commentary the distinction between the framework of the Church and the spirit actuating it appears. There is a protest against the constraints exercised by the religious authority in some directions coupled with laxity in others.² Luther attacks the excesses of luxury,³ asks for a reduction in the number of fasts and feasts, and denounces the exactions and tyranny of the bishops⁴ and of Rome.⁵ Here are the beginnings of his attitude to the epistle which became the Fifth Gospel of the Lutherans.

In the *Commentary on the Psalms*, 1513, Luther is as firm as Leo himself in maintaining the final authority of the Church. In 1517 he was not yet prepared to make that appeal to the Bible and the Bible only which was characteristic of his maturer thought. He went behind the Schoolmen to the Bible as interpreted by the Fathers, and of the Fathers St. Austin fell in most with his mood. The question of an absolutely final authority is plainly still in the future. The sermon of February 1517 was the first open attack on the hierarchy.⁶ Once he saw

¹ *Schol. Rom.*, p. 248 ff.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 310.

³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 310.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, p. 135. Cf. Erigena, *Divis. Nat.*, I, 71.

⁵ Ficker, II, pp. 297-8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 4, 6, 31.

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the difference between the real and the ideal, there was formed the outline of the conception that the real constituted an obstacle to the ideal. These were no longer contrasts: they were contraries. He, however, holds resolutely that the Roman Church has always maintained the true faith, and that it is necessary for all Christians to be in union with her.¹ On May 16, 1518, he can preach that the real communion of the Church is invisible, deducing the consequences that excommunication cannot cut one off from it, and that nothing but sin can affect it.² This idea of the Invisible Church boasts an honourable pedigree, running back to Hus, Wyclif, and to St. Austin himself, who put it forward in the form of the *Communio Sanctorum*.³ Clement of Alexandria compares the Invisible Church to a chain of rings upheld by a magnet.⁴ It is to him "the Church of the first-born."⁵ To Origen the difference between the Visible and the Invisible Church is the difference between nominal and real Christianity.⁶ Men, he believed, might belong to the Visible Church and yet might not belong to the Invisible Church. Men might be cut off from the former, and yet might be members of the body of Christ.⁷

In the sermon of May 16, 1518, Luther asserts that the priest can cut off "corporal, exterior communion," from worship and the sacraments, which outwardly unite the members of a Church. It is out of his power to deprive one of that "spiritual communion" of the faith, hope and charity which unite the soul to God.⁸ About the same time he writes: "A censure of the Church will not in the least cut me off from the Church, if it binds me to the truth."⁹ Inconsistently

¹ Köhler, 54; Löscher, II, 407.

² Luther's *Sermo de virtute excommunicationis*, *Op. varii argu.*, II, 306; his *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 130, 134, 137; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, I, 211; Kolde, *Martin Luther*, I, 164.

³ Ritschl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, p. 68 ff.; and *Lehre d. Rechtfertigung u. Versöhnung* (2nd ed.), III, 267 ff. On the patristic conception of the Invisible Church cf. R. Seeberg, *Der Begriff der Christlichen Kirche*, Erlangen, 1885. Under the influence of Carlstadt, Lambert of Avignon developed the idea of the Invisible Church. It is, according to Lambert: "Ce sont eux qui ont l'Esprit du Christ." *Farrago* . . . , art. 287. It was in keeping with his emphasis on "vocation intérieure." Cf. the 23rd and 24th Prop. of the Bull "Exsurge Domino," 1520; Möhler, *Symbolik*, 49. There is urgent need of a monograph on the conception of the Invisible Church and its influence.

⁴ *Strom.*, VII, 2, 9.

⁵ *Protrep.*, IX, 82.

⁶ *In Matt.*, XII, 12.

⁷ *In Lev. Hom.*, XIV, 3; IX, 9; *In Ezech. Hom.*, XIII, 2; *In Jesu Nave, Hom.*, IX, 4; XXI. Cf. *De Orat.* 20 ad init.; *In Jesu Nave*, III, 5.

⁸ *Werke*, Weim. ed., p. 680. Cf. *ibid.*, I, 638 ff., and *Opp. lat. var.*, 2, 306 ff.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 680. Cf. *Sermo Dom X post Trinitatem*, 1516, *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, 66, and the thesis of Oct. 31, 1517.

enough, he tells Mazzolini that he submits himself to the judgment of the Church.¹ Practically he has reached the point of denying that the Church possesses the power of binding and loosing souls. When the Bishop of Vasona degraded Savonarola in absence of mind he uttered the words, "Separo te ab Ecclesia militante atque triumphante." On the spot Savonarola corrected him, saying, "Militante, non triumphante: hoc enim tuum non est." The day was to come when Luther was expelled from the Church Militant, but he was always persuaded of his membership of the Church Triumphant.

When Luther surveyed his early thought, he wrote: "Dear reader, if you want to read these writings, remember that I have been, as Augustine said of himself, of the number of authors who have progressed by writing and teaching. I have not been of those who, without work, without research, without preliminary essays, attain immediate perfection and understand at first sight the whole sense of the Scripture."² It is a caution to be borne in mind, for though his fundamental thought scarcely altered, he lived and learned. The Bourbons learned nothing and forgot nothing: Luther was the exact reverse.

As the place of the Church, the Roman Church, recedes in the mental horizon of Luther, that of the Council emerges. Theological reasons are at work: so too are national. When summoned to Rome, he writes directly to the Emperor Maximilian, begging him to have a care for the honour of his University.³ "What have we Germans to do with St. Peter?" he inquires.⁴ On October 18, 1518, he appeals from the Legate Cajetan and the Pope Leo X, badly informed, to one who would be better informed, who will be pointed out to him by the Most High.⁵ In November 1518 there appears the *Appellatio ad futurum concilium universale*, sharpening the appeal from the Pope, who was in error, to the correct judgment of a future

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, 662.

² D. Martini Lutheri opera latina varii argumenti, Frankofurti ad M. et Erlangen, I, 1865, p. 23.

³ Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 131; his *Briefwechsel* (Enders), I, 214.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, 678. Cf. his *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 131, 207 ff., 211, 216, 231, 233 ff., 261, 270, 274-5; 6, 9; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 24, 1 ff.; 64, 361; *Op. varii argu.*, 2, 349, 351, 406, 435; Evers, I, 426-70; 2, 309-18, 342-50. Evers carefully gathers the evidence. Cf. also Seckendorf, I, 47 f.; Löscher, 3, 6 ff., 92 ff., 820 ff.; Scheurl, *Briefb.*, II, 63, 68-9, 80; Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, 240 ff., 253; Ulmann, *Franz v. Sickingen* (Leipzig, 1872), 153 ff.; Strauss, *Ulrich v. Hutten*, I, 217.

⁵ Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 163-5; and his *Briefwechsel* (Enders), I, 266 ff. Cf. Riffel, I, 109; Hefele-Hergenröther, IX, 80. For approval of Luther's attacks on Rome cf. Kampschulte, II, 30-5, 51; Krause, *Éobanus Hessus*, I, 259-329; Roth, *Reformation in Nürnberg*, 49.

General Council.¹ The supporter of the authority of the Church in the *Commentary on the Psalms*, 1513-15, in the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1515-16, the writer of the sermon of August 1, 1516, is the author of an *Appeal to a Future Œcumenical Council*.² The Church, according to it, no longer proclaimed the true Gospel: there was, in fact, an antithesis between the Church and the Gospel.

In May 1518, he markedly distinguished the private and the public capacity of the head of the Church. In his reply to an ultramontane like Mazzolini, June 1518, he marks the difference between "the fact of the Pope" and the doctrine of the Church.³ He tells Mazzolini that Italians are not the only theologians who understand the Bible. When Ghinucci cites him to appear in Rome, August 7, 1518, he appeals strongly to the Elector of Saxony to be tried in his own land, and the Saxon Court was stirred by his trumpet-call. The Elector, Frederick the Wise, refused to give him up. He was not, he said, yet convinced that his subject had fallen into heresy. Had this been the case he would have carried out his duty as a Christian prince; but as it was, any action against Luther would only have injured his University.⁴ At Augsburg the revolutionary opposes Scripture to the Decretals, rejecting those which do not agree with the Bible. When he leaves that town in October 1518, he receives the Decretals only so far as they were "consonæ . . . sacræ scripturæ,"⁵ and holds the idea that the separate Eastern Churches formed part of the Catholic Church.

In February 1519, in his *Unterricht auff etlich Artikell*,

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, 36 ff. Cf. Dieckhoff, 227-30; Riffel, 1, 119 ff.; Hefele-Hergenröther, IX, 86-8.

² On Luther's attitude to authority cf. his *Briefe* (De Wette), 1, 113, 121, 129, 131 ff., 141, 143 ff., 166, 188, 191, 193, 253-6, 260 f., 282, 344 ff., 392; 2, 1 ff., 340 ff., 435 ff.; 3, 4 ff., 11 ff.; 4, 45 ff., 259 ff.; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 21, 156 ff.; 26, 221; 27, 8 ff.; 64, 363; *Op. varii argu.*, 1, 16, 18, 239, 285 ff., 294 ff.; *Corp. Ref.*, 25, 777; Löscher, *Reformations-Akta*, 1, 484 ff., 2, 8 f., 80, 353 ff., 365, 404, 421, 426, 444, 453, 554 ff., 562; *Tischreden* (F. and B.), 3, 197; Tentzel-Cyprian, *Histor. Bericht v. Anfange*, 1, 273, 283; 2, 165; Seckendorf, 3, 139 ff. Cf. also Janus, *Der Papst und das Konzil*, 381; Ranke, 1, 106; Knaake, *Jahrb. des deutschen Reichs*, 1, 125; T. Kolde, *Augustiner-Congr.*, 321, 411, and his *Luther's Stellung zu Konzil und Kirche*, 37, 42 f., 115 f.; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 1, 799; Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Ref.*, 1, 391; Hergenröther, *Kath. Kirche und Staat*, 22; Hefele, *Konziliengesch.*, 1, 54; 7, 566-8, 600, 831, 835, 845, 850.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 1, p. 582: "Audio papam ut papam, id est ut in canonibus loquitur, et secundum canones . . . non autem, quando secundum suum caput loquitur."

⁴ *Briefwechsel*, 1, 310 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1, p. 352; *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, 10. Cf. his letter to Spalatin, Jan. 14, 1519, "Non ligat nec nocet ira Decretalium, quando tuiet miser cordia Christi."

he deprecates the beginning of a schism.¹ In June 1519, in his thirteenth proposition on the power of the Pope, and in his *Resolutiones* in September, he examines the origin of the papal authority, and finds it titleless.² There is no promise made to St. Peter: the texts alleged in its favour are twisted or false. Rome possesses no more jurisdiction over souls than Constantinople. The primacy is simply a creation of history. The time is not far distant when the Pope, falling from his pride of place, will be proclaimed everywhere as the son of Belial, the Antichrist.³ In the course of this Disputation with Johann Eck at Leipzig, 1519, he maintains his belief in an Invisible Church, and sets up another authority beside that of the successor of St. Peter.⁴ During the discussion he appeals to Scripture as the test by which the Fathers, Popes, Schoolmen, and Councils must be tried in the last resort. What was the relation between the authority of the sacred record and that of a Council? This he has not settled. Perhaps he was not even aware that behind his preference for the Bible lay his own strong judgment. How can he remain within the fold? Has he not attacked the infallibility of both papal and conciliar authority? For in pressing Luther Johann Eck had compelled him to avow his sympathy with Hus in his stand at the Council of Constance. Eck's controversial instinct was sound. Luther was forced to see that he believed the heretic was condemned most unfairly. Could an unfair condemnation do other than oblige him to reconsider his attitude towards a Council? Moreover, the Roman Church was not the whole Church, for the Eastern Church had never submitted to the Pope or acknowledged his supremacy. Was the Pope such by the command of Jesus or simply by human appointment? ⁵

National feelings continued to excite the great revolutionary. When Roman Curialists speak with savage contempt of the

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 72; Erl. ed., 24², 10. Contrast Kähnis, *Die deutsche Reformation*, I, 149-74.

² Cf. the fierce *Confutatio primatus Papal* by the Saxon Minorite, Matthias Döring; it is based on the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsilius of Padua. Cf. P. Albert, Matthias Döring, *Ein deutscher Minorit des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1892).

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, pp. 214, 216, *Resolutio . . . de potestate papæ*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 2, 183 ff.; *Opp. lat. var.*, 3, p. 296 ff.

⁵ On his attitude to Rome cf. his *Colloquia* (Bindseil), I, 121, 134, 162-5, 195, 372 f., 376; 2, 283 f.; 3, 35, 107, 169, 230, 232, 249; his *Tischreden* (Bindseil), I, 141, 181 f.; 2, 213, 302 f.; 3, 179 f., 183-5, 211 f., 299, 335; 4, 676-9, 687-8; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 23, 10; 26, 131; 27, 90; 31, 72, 327 f.; 32, 424; 39, 277; 40, 284; *Op. exeg.*, 4, 264; Evers, 3, 123-44; 183-6, 399 ff.; Lauterbach (Seidemann), 9, 64, 87, 105, 165 f.; *Briefe* (De Wette), 4, 183.

"Teutonic beasts" Luther accents the title as proudly as when the Dutch called themselves "beggars."¹ Papal authority has gone: conciliar authority follows it.² In July 1519, he admits the infallibility of the Council in definitions of faith; yet, three months later, even this admission is withdrawn. Do not Councils contradict one another? Have they, therefore, committed error? Did not, for example, the Council of Constance condemn the Christian propositions of Hus? "In that session at least the assembly has simply been a conventicle of the devil."³ Hus had the people behind him: so has he. It is easy to understand why Crotus Rubianus wrote to him on October 16, 1519, "Brother Martin, often I surprise myself in looking at you as the father of our country."⁴

Doubts still remain. In the preface to his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, September 1519, he draws a distinction between the Roman Church and the Roman Curia, the first of which it is not lawful to oppose, while the second ought to be more stoutly resisted by all kings and princes than the Turk himself. Once he accepted the authority of the Fathers, whereas in 1519 he only accepts it when confirmed by the Bible.⁵ In short, there was neither Pope nor Council in a position of authority. As for the bishops, if the highest office of the priesthood is the absolution of sins, all are equal. The Pope cannot be superior to the bishop, the bishop cannot be superior to the priest. Lastly, if the sacraments are only signs, and if the order of the priesthood is not a sacrament, there are no longer any priests. The Church, built upon faith, requires no external hierarchy.⁶ In *Von dem Bapstum tzu Rome wider dem hochberumpten Romanisten tzu Leiptzk*, he defiantly tells the world that he does not intend the German people to fall on their knees before Rome.

Before February 24, 1520, he saw Hutten's republication of Lorenzo Valla's book on the *Donation of Constantine*, laying bare the basis of the fictions on which the temporal power of Rome rested. Historically then his former authority was founded on a lie, and, when the foundation was swept away, what remained?

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 5, p. 436.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 2, pp. 399, 400 ff., 427, 429; *Opp. lat. var.* 3, pp. 240, 244 ff., 281, 284.

³ *Briefwechsel* (Enders), No. 234.

⁴ *Resolutiones* (1519), *Werke*, Weim. ed., II, pp. 404-5. Cf. *Op. in Psalmos*, p. 451.

⁵ Dante recognizes that the Bible is above the Church, *De Mon.*, III, xiv.

⁶ *Resolutio . . . de potestate papæ*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 239; Sermon of July 29, 1519, preached at the Chapel of Leipzig Castle. *ibid.*, p. 248.

For Luther it is now an easy step to the position taken up in one of the three great tracts of the year 1520, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. The keys have been given to St. Peter, and in his person to the whole Christian Church. As the ecclesiastical function is only the ministry of the Word, all the faithful are priests, seeing every Christian receives by the Spirit the gift of understanding and the gift of interpretation.¹ In June 1520, the appeal *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* consecrates this theory of universal priesthood. In his *Von dem Bapstum tzu Rome*, 1520, he asserts his belief in a congregation of the saints in faith. Can any one, however, see who is a saint who possesses faith? ² On November 17, 1520, he formally removes his appeal from Leo X, whom he characterizes as an unjust judge, an obstinate heretic and schismatic, an enemy and oppressor of Holy Scripture.³ The solution of the question of authority is the convocation of a General Council, free and Christian. He requests the Emperor, the Electors, and the princes to join with him in opposing "the unchristian conduct and the amazing enormities of the Pope." The work of Luther was as national as Oliver Cromwell's: the work of Erasmus was as international as William III's. The reformer's condemnation, when at last it came, was to him not only an outrage upon religion, but also upon "the German name." Luther's pamphlet, *Why the Books of the Roman Pontiff and of his Disciples have been burnt by Dr. Martin Luther*, appeared in the following year. In it he makes final his break with the authority of the Roman Church, claiming that the Spirit of God has inspired his action. In his *Ad librum Ambrosii Catharini Responsio*, 1521, he argues that the Church is completely spiritual.⁴ Where his principles are leading him he cannot plainly discern. He cannot give them up because he believes them to be rooted in the Bible and his own apprehension of the truth; but in the meantime he leaves the issue to God.

The doctrine of the religion of the individual and of the freedom of conscience seems boldly enunciated. In a sense it is, for Luther builded better than he knew. His mystic view of

¹ *De captiv. babyl.*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 564: "Omnes sumus sacerdotes quotquot christiani sumus . . . sacerdotium aliud nihil est quam ministerium," *Ibid.*, p. 566: "Ministerium verbi facit sacerdotem et episcopum."

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, pp. 296, 300 ff.; Erl. ed., 27, pp. 102, 107.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, 576 ff., 595 ff.; *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 521-2.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 719; *Opp. lat. var.*, 5, p. 309: "Dicit autem, si ecclesia tota est in spiritu ut res omnino spiritualis, nemo ergo nosse poterit, ubi sit ulla eius pars in tote orbe." Cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 419; *Opp. lat. var.*, 6, p. 127 (1522): "Quis ecclesiam monstrabit, quum sit occulta in Spiritu et solum credatur? Sicut dicimus: Credo ecclesiam sanctam."

inspiration has nothing, however, in common with the subjectivity of our day. The conception of doctrinal truth and of a religious society obsesses him always. True, he has overthrown the historic Church. Notwithstanding this, the Church of Faith remained firmly standing.

Luther belongs to a body of men who believe in the truth of the Gospel and on whom God has bestowed His grace.¹ In one sense he is the father of individualism, for he is the man who made justification by faith a force in the world: in another sense he is nothing of the sort. He cannot bear the idea that he stands alone: he belongs to a great communion of all the faithful. In a noble song E. M. Arndt asked the question, "What is the German Fatherland?" His answer was that wherever the German tongue resounds and lifts itself to God in song, there was the Fatherland. The answer of Luther is not unlike. Wherever he met the faithful, there he found the Church. No narrow boundaries of land confined it. It was not limited to Rome, to Jerusalem or to Wittenberg. It was to be met with wherever a Christian bent the knee in prayer and worshipped God from the heart: there was a portion of the Christian Church. Heretics like Hus, and Fathers like St. Austin, were members of it. It included in its bead-roll Greeks no less than Romans. Was this Church a loose incoherent body? It possessed coherence, for the Word of God, with its clear text, imposed on all its members one faith and one law.² The Bible is the corner-stone of the building.³ The adversaries of Luther claim that the Church is on their side, and he no less confidently affirms that the Bible is on his. There is witnessed the spectacle of opposing authorities affording truth an opportunity to emerge.

In Nürnberg Luther was heard gladly by the humanists and clergy, the lawyers and patricians, of that ancient town. There Hieronymus Ebner, Johann Holzschuher, Christoph Scheurl and Lazarus Spengler rallied to his standard.⁴ Nor was Nürnberg in any wise unique in its adhesion. Augsburg, Strassburg—it was largely through this town that the Reformation reached France—Schlettstadt, Bâle and Zürich all welcomed the small effective pamphlets and the no less effective

¹ *Op. in Psalmos*, pp. 450, 639.

² P. Imbart de la Tour, *Les Origines de la Réforme*, Tome III, pp. 55-7. This author's chapter on Luther deserves earnest study; it is most illuminating. Indeed the whole volume is one of the most penetrating we know.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 349; *De captiv. babyl.*, p. 560.

⁴ Cf. Roth, *Reformation in Nürnberg*, p. 49; Scheurl, *Briefbuch*, II, pp. 53-65. Scheurl writes to Eck, Feb. 19, 1519, on the warm support of the clergy, *ibid.*, II, p. 83.

caricatures.¹ Multitudes crowded to hear Luther because, as Melancthon remarks, "they look on him as the restorer of liberty."²

Staupitz turned the attention of Luther to a strong emancipatory force, the spirit of mysticism. Bernard of Clairvaux,³ Tauler,⁴ Suso, Ruysbroeck, Gerson, Gerard de Groote, and the Brothers of the Common Life were active influences with him. Luther admired Tauler so much that from 1515 his sermons became one of his bedside volumes. Like Erasmus he grew tired of scholastic discussions, and, unlike Erasmus, in the silence of his cloister he took refuge in mystic contemplation. There Tauler taught him to feel what St. Austin taught him to think. The soul of man must wait patiently upon God, and must passively receive His grace. Such a conception of the inward life unconsciously turned his thoughts from works and from means of salvation.⁵ Mystic religion insisted on the direct relation between man and the personal God revealed in Jesus Christ, and this relationship was realized by love. It broods, it meditates. One process it cannot employ, and that is argument.

His *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* bears emphatic testimony to his adherence to the mystical view of the Church as it was, and as it might be, to the Church of History and to the Church of the Faithful. It also bears testimony to his denial of free will, and this denial the mystics shared.⁶ He rated highly the *Theologia Deutsch*, and the Frankfort knight of the Teutonic Order says in it: "When

¹ Cf. Kampschulte, II, p. 80, n. 4; Hagen, *Deutschlands literarische Verhältnisse*, II, pp. 87-8, 97-8, 353. These references illustrate the activities of colporteurs in selling Luther's books.

² *Corpus Reform.*, I, p. 657.

³ Cf. Jundt, *Le développement de la pensée religieuse de Luther jusqu'en 1517*, p. 88; Ficker, his edition of the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, II, pp. 15, 33, 197.

⁴ The influence of Tauler is at work from 1515. Cf. Ficker, II, p. 205; cf. also Luther's letter to Spalatin, Dec. 14, 1516; Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 110 ff.; Böhmer, 35 (1906 ed., omitted in 1910 ed.).

⁵ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 4, pp. 83, 356; 9, p. 98; Böhmer, *Luther im Lichte der neuesten Forschung*, 53 (1910 ed.); W. Braun, *Die Bedeutung der Concupiscenz in Luther's Leben u. Lehre*, 74, 295; Köhler, I, 239, 244, 261, 285, 332-5, 362 ff. Cf. an important article on "Luther u. die deutsche Mystik" by Hunzinger in *Neue kirchl. Zeitschr.*, 19 (1908), Hft. 11, pp. 972-88. Cf. also Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 115; Hering, *Die Mystik Luthers im Zusammenhang seiner Theol.* (Leipzig, 1879), 52 f.

⁶ Ficker demonstrates that Luther held the proposition of "the absolute impossibility of any good in the natural sphere," maintaining "in the strongest terms the exclusive power and action of the salutary and unconditional will." In the preface, Ficker, p. lxxv, refers to *Schol. Rom.*, pp. 38, 42, 71, 90, 91, 93, 101, 171, 179, 188, 218. These amply bear out Ficker's contention.

man is in a state of grace and agreeable to God, he wills and yet it is not he who wills, but God, and there the will is not his own." "And there is nothing else willed but what God wills, for there God wills not man, the will being united to the Eternal Will."¹ By the speculative mysticism of Dionysius the Areopagite he was repelled : by practical mysticism he was attracted.

Mysticism then was aiding in changing his views from indeterminism to determinism. In 1516 he believed that works done with grace possess a preparative value, leading to justification. In his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* he carefully explains how the will of man does not in the least belong to the person who wills, any more than the road belongs to the runner. "All is God's, who gives and creates the will." We are all instruments of God, who works in all. Our will is like a saw and a stick : this illustration seemed to make a strong appeal to him, for he often employs it. Sawing is the act of the hand which saws, but the saw is passive ; the animal is beaten, not by the stick, but by him who holds the stick. Is not the will nothing ? Is not God who wields it everything ?² In spite of theologians and moralists, there is no innate principle, making men discern good and evil. There is only one test of works. If God commands them they are good : if He forbids them they are evil.³

Read his comments on the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, verse 28 : "Free will apart from grace exercises absolutely no power on behalf of righteousness, it is necessarily in sin. Therefore St. Augustine in his book against Julian terms it 'rather an enslaved than a free will.'⁴ This Father glorified God and humiliated man to the dust. After the obtaining of grace, however, the will becomes really free, at least so far as salvation is concerned. The will, it is true, is free by nature, but only for what comes within its province, not for what is above it, being bound in the chain of sin and therefore unable to choose what is good in God's sight." That is, nature confers freedom to do wrong, but confers no power of doing right. Man's passions lead him astray ; he has no virtues of his own to lead him aright. The moment Luther insists on the complete corruption of man's nature is the

¹ *Theologia Deutsch*, ed. F. Pfeiffer, p. 208.

² *Schol. Rom.*, p. 225.

³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 221.

⁴ St. Austin's view occurs in *Contra Julianum*, l. 8, c. 8 ; Migne, *P. L.*, XLIV, p. 689.

moment he realizes the irresistibility of grace.¹ The certainty of salvation, the doctrine of predestination—these conceptions inevitably follow. It is noteworthy that Schleiermacher insists upon our powerlessness to work out our own salvation, and the complete abandonment with which we must offer our person to God.

Shortly after the conclusion of his lectures on the Epistle to the Romans followed the Wittenberg Disputation in 1516 on "man's powers and will without grace." There he urges that "man's will without grace is not free, but captive, though not unwillingly."² The next year he so limits the worth of indulgences that he is on the high road to their rejection. In the Heidelberg Disputation, April 25, 1518, he declares that after sin free will is will only in name, and that when a man has done the most he is capable of, he commits a mortal sin.³ Even the saints cannot fulfil the commands of God, for all have sinned, all have come short. Of course this view destroys the doctrine of indulgences, attacking a basis of ecclesiastical power. If the saints have not been able to carry out the law, obviously they have no merits to spare for mortals. The treasury of the Church is empty. If faith alone saves us, if works can do nothing for us, what is the value of the cult of the saints?⁴

God works everything in us; but just as the carpenter, however capable he may be, cannot work properly with a jagged axe, so, in spite of God's work, sin still remains owing to the imperfection of the tool He uses. Liberty is only a word, "a title," a mere nothing.⁵ The sacraments help men, but they only help men when they are faithful.⁶ Baptism and Holy Communion are no longer means: they are signs of our justification. In August 1519, he published the Latin Resolutions on the Leipzig Disputation, and in them the evolution of

¹ Ficker, II, pp. 108, 143 ff.

² "Voluntas hominis sine gratia non est libera, sed servit, licet non invita."

³ The 13th thesis in the *Explicatio conclusionis*, VI, *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, p. 367. The editor gives in a note: "Martin Bucer testifies in his letter to Beatus Rhenanus on May 1, 1518, that this comparison was made by Luther in the Disputation." *Ibid.*, p. 367: "Semper peccamus, dum benefacimus." Cf. *Decem præcepta*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, p. 427. Luther came to think in 1519 that the imitation of the virtues of our ancestors is a pagan idea, *Op. in Psalmos*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., p. 478. Erasmus ably noted the stages in Luther's denial of free will.

⁴ Contrast his sermon, *Von der Bereitung zum Sterben*, 1519, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 689.

⁵ *Liberum arbitrium post peccatum res est de solo titulo, et dum facit quod in se est, peccat mortaliter.*

⁶ *Disputatio de lege ac fide*, 1519, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 24.

his doctrine of determinism is plain.¹ Till then he had conceded the freedom of doing wrong, but now even this concession is taken away. "Free will," he states, "is purely passive on every one of its acts which can come under the term of will. . . . A good act comes absolutely from God, because the whole activity of the will consists of the Divine action which extends to the members and powers of both soul and body, no other activity existing."² "At whatever hour of our life we may find ourselves we are either the slaves of concupiscence or of love, for both govern free will."³ As a result of the fall of Adam human nature remained thoroughly corrupt. Reserve after reserve disappears, and in the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* he holds no longer that liberty exists in a state of grace.⁴ In his *De Servo arbitrio* he was one day to declare the total absence of liberty. With the first transgression man lost the image of God, though the Word and the Holy Spirit can restore it.⁵ Three disputations had been finished, and Luther had come to feel, what Newman long afterwards felt, that when men understand what each other mean, they see for the most part that controversy is either superfluous or hopeless. The effect on the disputant is not to be ignored. He may not affect other people but he affects himself, his views becoming more crystallized as he endeavours to meet his opponent.

The discoveries in a particular field are in a chain of sequence which obliges them to occur in a series. Luther entertains the conception of the slavery of the human will, which ushers in a train of possibilities. Once he grasps this conception, the break with Rome is inevitable, for he feels he is the servant of God, and that therefore his actions are inspired. Similarly, after Columbus announces the discovery of America the fall of the mediæval Church is possible, for it has aspired to be universal, and here was a continent outside it. After Kepler announces the laws of planetary motion the discovery of the principle of gravitation is powerfully stimulated. After Galileo announces the laws of the pendulum, its use in timepieces comes into the foreground. After Sir William Crookes discovers his tube, the way is open for the X-ray. After Hertz discovers the waves associated with his name, wireless telegraphy is only a matter of time.

¹ Denifle-Weiss, I², 509; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, I², 215; 2, 50, 124. Cf. also W. Braun, 215-21.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 421; Erl. ed., 3, p. 272.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 424; Erl. ed., 3, p. 276.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 586.

⁵ Genesis ix. 6; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 2, p. 291.

The doctrines of Luther were startling enough in Wittenberg, but created no impression in Rome. After all, sound requires atmosphere, and there was no atmosphere for this sound in the Vatican. Leo X was so absorbed in the imperial election that such minor matters as the effusions of a mere monk counted for nothing. It was an error in hearing fraught with the gravest consequences. In 1521 the Pope was busy hunting¹ and amusing himself, and business remained at a standstill.² Similarly, on some of the most important days of the French Revolution Louis XVI entered in his diary "rien," meaning that he had no hunting. The historian of thought is often so preoccupied with the evolution of ideas that he ignores, not the circumstances under which they originate, but the external circumstances which seem far removed from their development. It is always a mistake to pass by events: it is a serious blunder with Erasmus, and a fatal one with Luther. In the critical days when the views of Luther began to appear, the contest between Charles V and Francis I prevented the former crushing him, and to the last day he lived he profited by the complications of the foreign policy of the Emperor. If any one cares to give either Francis I of France or Suleiman I³ of Turkey—or to both—the title of "The Protector of Lutheranism" he will speak the exact truth of the work that the French king wittingly and the Turkish Sultan unwittingly performed.⁴ The fall of Rhodes on December 21, 1522, to the Turk was the fall of the last bulwark of Christianity. The terror at papal Rome was as great as when Hannibal stood before the gates of ancient Rome.

Hegel brings the manuscript of his *Phænomenology* to Jena the very day of the battle between the French and the Prussians, and is surprised to hear that there is a war in progress. The investigation of his thought may presumably be studied *in vacuo*. The thought of Luther differs by worlds. It is largely

¹ Bergenroth, II, n. 303, n. 310; Gnoli, *Cacce*, 3 ff.; Roscoe-Henke, III, 616 ff.; Sanuto, XVII, 486; XXIII, 74, 437; XXIV, 51; XXV, 385 ff.; XXVI, 38, 136, 142, 176, 216, 219, 223, 420; XXIX, 442 ff. Yet in 1516 Aleander warned Leo of the danger of a German revolt. Cf. Balan, n. 31; Brieger, n. 11.

² Sanuto, XXIX, pp. 633, 651; Clementi, pp. 167-8.

³ The Sultan reckoned on the dissensions created by Luther. Cf. *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, 396; Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 283. Cf. also A. Westermann, *Die Turkenhilfe und die politisch-kirchlichen Parteien auf dem Reichstag zu Regensburg* (Heidelberg, 1910).

⁴ Cf. Mignet, *Rivalité de François I et de Charles Quint* and J. Ursu, *La Politique Orientale de François I, 1515-1547* (Paris, 1908). The latter is singularly well documented. Cf. Hagen, 2, 107; Kalkoff, *Prozess*, 288 ff., 402 ff., 432-4.

conditioned by circumstance, for he was as wonderful an opportunist as Cromwell. No one, held the English Puritan, goes so far as he who does not know whither he is going. Luther goes far precisely for this reason: he never asks to see the distant scene as one step is enough for him. Does not God direct his path? "Non Desideriis Hominum Sed Voluntate Dei" is the moving inscription on the medal struck in 1778 by the Cardinal of York as Henry IX, the last of the Stuarts. It formed the unconscious motto of Luther, for all his labours were due to the will of God, not to the wishes of men.

In the middle of these Disputations Luther turned for support to the Sorbonne. "It has more regard for truth," he believed, "the mistress of everything, and the Word which guides the Church, than care for power."¹ In his erroneous belief he forwarded the details of the Leipzig Disputation, the plea against free will, hoping to see the Sorbonne against Louvain and Cologne. There was a moment when, feeling the pangs of despair, he dreamt of flight to France.²

This fit of depression passed away—for a time at least—and he continued to develop his doctrine. There is nothing new in his view that God justifies by faith apart from the works of the law. It is older than Peter Lombard, though in him Luther found it. The Master of the Sentences declared that "justitia Dei est que gratis justificat impium per fidem sine operibus Legis."³ His attitude is plain in the view that "sequuntur . . . opera justificatum, non præcedunt, justificandum, sed sola fide sine operibus præcedentibus fit homo justus. . . . Bona opera etiam ante fidem inania sunt." From St. Austin Luther learnt that the centre of dogma is a proper conception of sin. The African theologian described as penetratingly the City of the Devil as the City of God, and here Luther followed him. The centre of the pupil's dogmatic position was the irremediable corruption of man. Logically the matter was clear to his mind. Sin, justification and faith were all intimately bound together. The fulfilment of God's commands is beyond the evil nature of man. Is Christianity then a doctrine of despair? This despair is to Luther the very condition of our salvation. Our powerlessness proves the necessity of our redemption. There is nothing good in us: we possess no merits of our own. Christianity, however, has accomplished all, has won all for us. The Son of Man died that the sons of men might become the

¹ *Ad Ægocerotem, Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 676.

² Enders, I, Nos. 115-6. The date of 115 is Nov. 25, 1518.

³ Migne, CXCI, p. 1323.

sons of God. Faith in God is "a simple obedience of the Spirit."¹ This faith does not proceed from us, and works apart from us our salvation. It is the faith of confidence, of penitence and of love which realizes in us the very presence of Jesus. Man is nothing, God is everything. "Whoever is united to God by faith becomes just": he is "at the same time a sinner and a just man, a sinner by the reality of his nature, a just man by the promise and the imputation of God."² What need, then, is there of works? How do they contribute to our salvation?³ Such was his attitude in 1516 to the problem of justification by faith. He held then with all his might that it is faith and faith alone which saves us.⁴ Faith in its turn produces works just as the tree bears fruit, though these works do not and cannot justify or save a man, simply proving "our inward justice." In a word, faith is in our souls a living law through which God thinks, acts, works in us, substituting his justice for ours, his life for ours, and revealing to us, in the depths of our misery, our healing. In truth Luther is no longer a humanist, he is no longer a mystic: he is a theologian with a system which as effectually shook Europe one way as Columbus and Copernicus shook it another way.

If the mind of man, as St. Anselm contended, contributes its share towards grasping the mystery of faith, reason at once steps in, and this Luther cannot allow for a moment. His conclusion is that "it is not in the power of man to have faith in God."⁵ God and God alone speaks to whom He wills, illuminates whom He pleases, hiding Himself from the wise and prudent, revealing Himself to babes. Man does not, cannot co-operate with God. In this system unity disappears: dualism appears. There is a divorce between mind and soul, between knowledge and faith. The law of reaction was in full swing. The precise definitions of the scholasticism, of the Aristotelian Church, were revolting to the ardent theologian.⁶ For science proper, he admitted, there was room, and his reason is characteristic. Science has for its subject-matter the nature and property of the body. Sacred science, however, must turn aside from the problems of substance and essence, and the like, and must confine its efforts to mourning for our

¹ Ficker, II, p. 275. Cf. *ibid.*, II, p. 332.

² *Ibid.*, II, pp. 107-8.

³ *Ibid.*, I, p. 93, on Rom. x. 6. Cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., I, p. 82.

⁴ Ficker, I, p. 114, 324. Cf. *ibid.*, II, p. 124.

⁵ *Resolutio disputationis de fide* (1520), *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 93.

⁶ *Decem praecepta*, p. 508: "Conclusiones XV, tractantes an libri philosophorum sint utiles aut inutiles ad theologiam," *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 29.

sins, showing true penitence, evincing genuine humility. This method possessed the qualities of its defects. For one thing, it led him to discard the symbolic interpretations and four senses of the commentators, which emptied the Bible of real meaning.¹ Here he believes that Origen had gone astray.² Jerome, too, had no right to interpret the sacred record in the light of history. Thereby he weakened its truth, dimly perhaps perceiving a characteristic weakness of the comparative method, for in its desire to know all it pardons all. Grammar enables us to understand the letter, the inner light, the Spirit. Jesus has power to make us realize his thought.³

Luther attempted the old task of vindicating the ways of God to man, but his attempt is a dualism against which our reason recoils. The Alexandrian Fathers proceeded on their task of unity when they reconciled Platonism with dogma. Their labours in the second century were continued by St. Ambrose in the fourth when he united Stoicism with the morality of Christianity. The Pelagians, like Luther, broke the chain of continuity which St. Austin in part restored. The mediævalists took up the work of the African doctor, and Anselm, Abelard, Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas completed it, proclaiming the union of faith with the intellect, of grace with liberty. Luther glanced over the solutions of these scholars, and the only one that was at all congruous with his system of thought was St. Austin. Erasmus saw the significance of Origen, Luther his insignificance. One is tempted to speculate on what might have happened if the reformer had possessed sufficient insight to feel the thought of Origen. To this moment his lack of perception of the worth of Origen is a loss to Christendom. An Origen might have a vision of the final unity of truth: a Luther had not a glimpse of it. The reformer was as blind as St. Austin himself was in this respect. Even the limited view he attained, Luther rendered more limited still by the turn he gave it. The Old Testament was contracted to passages in Genesis or the Psalms, with a stray reference to Habakkuk; the New to the Pauline Epistles,⁴ or rather to two of them, the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. True, there are four Gospels, but even they can be compelled to speak with Pauline accents. "Christ in the Gospel," he

¹ *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 1519, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 550.

² Cf. an attack on Origen and his interpretation of Genesis in *De captiv. babyl.*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., pp. 509, 562.

³ Cf. Enders, No. 59, for Luther's letter to Spalatin on this point.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 1, p. 128; 2, p. 280.

writes in 1519, "requires nothing but faith. . . . I wish the word merit did not exist in the Bible." The thought of St. James conflicts with the Lutheran interpretation. This is true, but "the style of the apostle (i.e. St. James) is below apostolic majesty": it is, comparatively speaking, an "epistle of straw." In a word he seeks in the Bible for maxims, not for principles: he requires a system, not a synthesis.

Scholars, e.g. Denifle, have analysed the diverse and heterogeneous elements in the doctrines of Luther. They justly deny his originality, showing where he borrowed from St. Paul or from St. Austin, from Occam or Hus, from Carlstadt or Erasmus. They sometimes forget that when he made these borrowings his own, he recreated them, welding them in the flame of his fiery zeal. The ideas of Rousseau are to be read substantially in Montaigne and in Locke. Nevertheless, Rousseau invested them with the shirt of Nessus, rendering them a burning force. Originality is of the highest importance: so too are the energy and initiative which oblige men to recognize the leadership of the man of action, who is sometimes a thinker. Fortunate in many of the circumstances of his life, Luther was not least fortunate in possessing the friendship of Philip Melanchthon. The genius of the reformer was unrestrained, inflexible, and he was a man of action. The genius of his friend was restrained, flexible, and he was a man of thought. Luther cared little for humanism and much for theology. Melanchthon cared little for theology and much for humanism. In a happy moment the two met, and the younger scholar fell under the spell of the reformer. Like Mohammed, Luther thought through his feelings. Like Erasmus, Melanchthon thought through his brain.¹ "La cœur a ses raisons," wrote Pascal in a pregnant saying, "que la raison ne connoît point,"² and the saying is eminently true of Luther. The reformer touched the heart, his friend the head. The grand-nephew of the great Hebrew scholar, Johann Reuchlin, it was fitting that Melanchthon should be Professor of Greek in the University of Wittenberg at the age of twenty-one. He became Præceptor Germaniæ, and he also became Præceptor Lutheri, thereby rendering one of the most valuable services of his life. "I am conscious of having pursued theology only to improve life," he said at eight-and-twenty. Luther leant too much to the view that "Pectus facit theologiam," a saying that is

¹ On Melanchthon's attitude to Erasmus in 1516-7, cf. Ellinger, 71-2, 87-109.

² *Pensées* (1829 edition), p. 3 2.



Erasmus

accountable for much weak theology. There is a deep truth in it, but it is a saying that requires to be supplemented by knowledge. Here Melanchthon stepped in. His friend had been a learned man, but in the strain of his active life studies had been cast to the one side. Melanchthon was ever at the side of Luther, and his presence was a clear reminder that the service of Jesus required head no less than heart.

Luther was conscious of the debt he owed his teacher. "I have been born to war," he wrote in a preface to Melanchthon's lectures on the Epistle to the Colossians, "with factions and devils, and therefore my books are stormy and warlike. I must root out the stumps and stocks, cut away the thorns and hedges, fill up the ditches, and am the rough forester, to break a path and make things ready. But Master Philip walks gently and silently, tills and plants, sows and waters with pleasure, as God has gifted him richly." It was a generous testimony to come from one who was older by fourteen years. "This little Greek," Luther confessed, "surpasses me even in theology." It takes a man of the stature of John the Baptist to utter the words, "He must increase, I must decrease." Few men like to think that they are merely forerunners of one greater than themselves. Luther was one of the few. For a time he regarded Melanchthon as a greater man than himself, and thought of him as the coming prophet for whose work he was preparing the way, declaring even so late as in 1529 that he was unworthy to unloose the latchet of his shoe. What Mutianus meant to his circle of admirers, what Melanchthon meant to Camerarius, what Montaigne meant to La Boëtie, what Goethe meant to Schiller, Luther meant to Melanchthon. It was significant of much that Melanchthon's coat of arms was the serpent of wisdom twined round the Cross. Melanchthon too gained by the friendship. He saw many sides to a problem, he was well aware of the many shades of meaning to be taken out of what seemed a simple passage in the Bible. Like not a few many-sided men, he was fearful, irresolute, inclined to compromise. He proved an admirable corrective to the fearlessness, the resoluteness, the uncompromising spirit of Luther. The reformer saw summits and abysses: his friend saw also the plain lying between them. Side by side they worked in life, and it is surely fitting that their dust mingles together in death. In the Church where Luther nailed his theses the two bodies are buried. The Castle Church of Wittenberg is a place dear to the lover of toleration. On the pavement at the right side lies the tomb of Luther, and it is placed charac-

teristically close to the pulpit. On the left side lies the tomb of Melanchthon, the man who more than any other preserved the balance of his masterful leader. "Mens æqua in arduis," runs the inscription written under the portrait of Warren Hastings in the council-chamber at Calcutta: it should be graven on the stone covering the remains of Philip Melanchthon.

The labours of Luther and Melanchthon were in no small degree aided by the geographical, astronomical and economic revolution which was in process in their time. The opening up of a new continent, the discovery of new planets, and the export to Europe of the new silver created a ferment which left the minds of men ready to receive fresh impressions. The results of the labours of Copernicus and Columbus are familiar to all, but the part that the muleteer of Potosi played is sometimes overlooked. He was travelling along a steep mountain-side. His mule slipped, and in his anxiety to save himself he clutched at a bush, which yielded a little to his pressure. The tearing up of some of the roots disclosed a mass of silver, and in this seemingly accidental fashion the metal once more altered the destinies of mankind. In the domain of matter, cause and effect exercise a widespread and wellnigh irresistible influence. The silver comes to Europe, raising prices, making labour dear, and thereby changing the tillage system to pasturage.¹ In the agricultural world men are upset, and as the cake of custom is irretrievably smashed they are not so unwilling to hear strange doctrine as their fathers would have been.

Powerful as the discovery of the new silver was on the course of the Reformation, had the muleteer of Potosi not discovered it, some other man might. The Peasants' War of 1525 would have come—in another form—if Luther had never translated the Bible. In this domain weather has interfered with the most disconcerting results. What was the effect upon the seventeenth century of the fog which darkened the battlefield of Lützen? Would the French Revolution have broken out in 1789 had not the winter preceding it been so terrible? It would doubtless have come wearing another guise, though the guise might not have permitted a Reign of Terror, and therefore afforded less opportunity for the genius of Napoleon.

In chemistry the mixture of two atoms of hydrogen with one of oxygen invariably produces water, and the form of the instruments of the mixture matters not. In history the

¹ Cf. W. Cunningham, *The Moral Influence of the Church on the Investment of Money and the Use of Wealth*.

method of the mixture of the atoms is more significant than the elements brought into contact. Even in chemistry oil and water do not mix. What misery the world would have been saved had Luther and Erasmus been as sympathetic towards each other as Luther and Melanchthon were. The characters of Luther and Erasmus could neither be assimilated nor amalgamated. Would the Reformation have been so successful had not five such men as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Cranmer and Knox appeared simultaneously? Frederick the Great gives the other point of view when he insists that "the older one becomes the more clearly one sees that King Hazard fashions three-fourths of the events in this miserable world," a conception which Cyprian held. Voltaire is never tired of dwelling on the small springs on which the greater events of history turn.¹ Was Gibbon right in his belief that if Charles Martel had been defeated at Tours, the creed of Islam would have overspread the greater part of Europe? If Mohammed had been killed in one of the first battles he fought, would a great monotheistic creed have arisen in Arabia? What turn would events have taken if Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon, had been as incompetent as Commodus, the son of Marcus Aurelius? In the spring of 323 B.C., the control of the framework of civilization from the Adriatic to the Panjab rested upon the single will of Alexander. He was snatched away, and the union, perhaps premature, of East and West passed away with him. What form would French art have assumed had not Charles VIII set out on his expedition to Italy, thereby making France feel the influence of Giotto, the founder of modern painting? It is easy to speak of the inevitable working out of cause and effect, but is the solution quite so simple? Had Frederick the Great never lived, would Prussia have begun the war of 1740, which started the country on the career which made the present war possible? In 1878, had the bullet of Nobiling cut short the days of Wilhelm I and given his son the throne ten years before 1888, the history of Germany would have been fundamentally altered. Indeed, had Frederick the Noble lived in all probability the devastation wrought from 1914 to 1918 would never have occurred. There has been a destroying revolution in Russia since March 1917. There would have been a preserving revolution had Alexander I been succeeded by a ruler like himself in 1825 and not

¹ Cf. Pascal, *Pensées*, 1829 ed., p. 137. Cf. also Burke, *Regicide Peace*, for the case of "a common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn," who "changed the face of fortune and almost of nature."

by Nicholas I. The personality of another Alexander I would have effected as epoch-making a transformation as either Luther or Prince Bismarck.

NOTE.—As this chapter deals largely with the place of authority in the mind of Erasmus and Luther, some books on the general question of the place of authority in religion are mentioned. Among the older works there are Abp. Laud's *Conference with Fisher*, W. Palmer's *Treatise on the Church of Christ*, R. Field's *Of the Church*, R. I. Wilberforce's *Inquiry into the Principles of Church Authority*, Cardinal Newman's *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church*, J. H. Möhler's *Symbolik*, and E. B. Pusey's *The Rule of Faith*. Among the modern writers are R. W. Dale's *Protestantism*, D. W. Forrest's *The Authority of Christ*, Bishop Gore's *Roman Catholic Claims*, F. J. Hall's *Authority—Ecclesiastical and Biblical*, Bishop Henson's *The Liberty of Prophecy*, R. W. Inge's *Faith*, J. H. Leckie's *Authority in Religion*, J. Martineau's *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, Lord Morley's *Compromise*, W. P. Paterson's *The Rule of Faith*, J. Réville's *Le protestantisme libéral*, A. Sabatier's *Les religions d'autorité et la religion de l'esprit*, G. Salmon's *The Infallibility of the Church*, Prof. V. H. Stanton's *The Place of Authority in Matters of Religious Belief*, D. Stone's *The Christian Church*, Dean T. B. Strong's *Authority in the Church*, W. Spens's *Belief and Practice*. Obviously this list can easily be lengthened, for all books dealing with the nature of the Church must discuss the degree of authority she possesses. Martineau's book is destructive in its criticism, and the weakness of Salmon's book is similar. The works of Forrest, Leckie and Paterson are suggestive. Dean Strong packs much information into a narrow compass: his fifth and sixth chapters deserve careful perusal. Dr. Stanton's book is increased in value by the patristic, mediæval, Reformation examples he adduces, and by the penetrating discussion to which he subjects them. Mr. Spens invests the whole question with force and freshness.

CHAPTER III

THE RIFT IN THE HARMONY

IN a letter of 1517 to Johann Lang, Luther informs him: "I am reading our Erasmus, but every day my regard for him diminishes. That he should so boldly attack the religious and the clergy for their ignorance pleases me, but I fear he does not sufficiently vindicate the rights of Christ and the grace of God. . . . How different is the judgment of the man who yields something to free will from one who knows nothing but grace." The reformer rejoiced on perusing the writings of the humanist to note that "he trounced the religious and the clergy so manfully and so learnedly, and had torn the veil off their out-of-date rubbish."¹ The attitude of the two men towards the reformation of the Church was at this time not dissimilar. Both desired the revival of the message of Christ, both led theology to its sources, and both encountered the same enemies, the schoolmen and the monks. If Luther thundered against the corruption of the Church, Erasmus exposed the misdeeds of the monks and the pseudo-theologians. Both were violently hostile to the pseudo-Dionysian writings. What separated them was their attitude towards dogma. Erasmus was nothing if he was not a humanist, Luther was nothing if he was not a theologian. The overpowering effect of grace was paramount in the mind of the masterful German; all roads led to the determinism of the will. Occam, his master, had insisted on the freedom of God and the freedom of the

¹ Letter of March 1, 1517, *Briefwechsel*, I, p. 88, No. 34. Cf. Allen, II, 415. Spalatin's letter to Erasmus, Dec. 11, 1516; Luther's *Briefwechsel*, (Enders), 2, 25. Contrast Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, I, 137-8. For modern views on the early relations between Erasmus and Luther cf. Baum, *Capito u. Butzer*, 46 ff.; Hagen, II, 323; Evers, 3, 338-54; Kampschulte, *Universität Erfurt*, I, 79 ff., 226 ff.; Kolde, *Anal.*, 8; Janssen, 2, 62, 64; Maurenbrecher, *Geschichte der kath. Reformation*, I, 119; Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des cl. Alterthums*, I, 48 f. Cf. also an article by Plitt on Erasmus's *Stellung zur Reform.*, *Zeitschr. f. luth. Theol. u. Kirche* (1866), 479 ff. E. Meyer wrote a valuable *Étude sur les Relations d'Érasme et de Luther*.

soul, but the latter he threw to the winds. Therefore, while he conveyed through Spalatin his good wishes for the renown and the progress of Erasmus, yet at the same time he anxiously reminds him how wrong it is to follow the example of the commentators in regarding certain passages where St. Paul condemns "righteousness by works" as referring only to the ceremonial Mosaic law, whereas the condemnation applies to all the works of the Decalogue. If such are performed "outside the faith in Christ," then though they should make of a man a Fabricius, a Regulus, or a paragon of perfection, yet they have as little in common with righteousness as blackberries with figs.¹ It is not works which justify a man, but rather his righteousness which sanctifies the works. Aristotle, whom everybody follows, knew nothing of righteousness, though St. Paul and St. Austin teach it. Luther praises the latter because he takes a firm stand on the foundation of the earlier Fathers. Hence, he contends, we must fall back on St. Austin, on him rather than on St. Jerome, to whom Erasmus gives the preference, for Jerome keeps too much to the historical side; he recommends St. Austin not merely because he was an Augustinian monk, for formerly he himself did not think him worthy of consideration until he fell in with his books.² His admiration of the African Father is characteristic. St. Austin emphasizes the importance of St. Paul at the expense of Jesus, and emphasizes western thought at the expense of eastern. Rarely has mankind suffered more than by the twist St. Austin gave to its thought. John Calvin was held fast in his grip, and he threw all his followers under the same yoke.

Luther had the humanists in his mind when he told Johann Lang that "the times are perilous, and a man may be a great Greek or Hebrew scholar without being a wise Christian."³ Abelard changed Anselm's "credo ut intelligem" into "intelligo ut credam," but the sympathies of the reformer lay with Anselm. He, however, made more concessions to the Zeitgeist than he probably realized. His spirit of criticism, his independent attitude to the ecclesiastical organization not only of his own day but also to that of antiquity, and his leaning to individualism came from the men who were classical scholars. How one such scholar was using his knowledge is abundantly clear.

¹ Cf. *Resolutiones, Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 408; *Briefe* (De Wette), 1, 40.

² Luther's letter to Spalatin, Oct. 19, 1516, *Briefwechsel*, 1, pp. 63-4, No. 25. Spalatin followed this advice as his letter to Erasmus proves, *Opp.*, III, col. 1579 (Le Clerc). The letter is also printed in *Briefwechsel*, 1, p. 65. Cf. Luther's letter to Lang, March 1, 1517; *Enders*, 1, No. 34.

³ Luther's letter to Lang, March 1, 1517, *Briefwechsel*, 1, p. 88.

Erasmus asks the assistance of William Latimer, student of sacred and secular letters, in the New Testament. The first edition was issued under difficulties, and the two persons employed to correct the press were insufficient. He is now engaged in the second edition. Latimer is not to breathe a word of this, as it would spoil the sale of the first. The scholar is glad to see the progress of learning. Fisher indeed wrote to him that no one could take offence at the version of the New Testament, but he found that in the Epistles of St. Paul the printer had made many blunders and omissions in the Greek text.¹

In Erasmus Luther saw the cynic Lucian and caught never a glimpse of the ardent reformer, though a reformer who was well aware of the limitations of his position. As early as 1517 he protests against the Erasmic habit of "making fun of the faults and miseries of the Church of Christ instead of bewailing them before God with deep sighs." The humanist, on the other hand, does not condemn Luther simply because he asks for a reformation: he knows that all thoughtful people approve of it: they desire "no more superstition, no more traffic in indulgences, war on monkish cupidity, war on the tyranny of the Holy See, that pest of Christianity."² In 1518 Erasmus read the theses against Indulgences, and Capito told Luther that the scholar admired them.³ The success Erasmus attained is not undeserved: "as a theologian he insisted on going to the sources."⁴ He saw that the Fathers were to be studied, that men must understand the pure Christianity of the primitive Church. Obviously none but scholars could perform such a task, and no less obviously none but princes could set it in motion: if the latter took it in hand, Erasmus informs Lang, all the world would be at peace.⁵ The people are quite unfitted for such a serious business: in their excitement they would be unable to find a solution. "I have never liked clamour," Erasmus confesses.⁶ He hated noise, the unforeseen eddies in the current of popular opinion. Just as Luther was an aristocrat in religion, so was he an aristocrat in mind. He no more believed in a wide diffusion of the spirit

¹ Erasmus's letter to Latimer, Feb. 1517, Allen, II, 485.

² Cf. Erasmus's letter to Lang, Oct. 17, 1518 (Horawitz, II, 2); Allen, II, 408.

³ Enders, I, No. 92, Sept. 3, 1518.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to the Rector of the University of Erfurt, July 31, 1518 (Le Clerc, 334 D). Louis Platz was the Rector.

⁵ Erasmus's letter to Lang, Oct. 1518 (Horawitz, II, 2); Allen, II, 408.

⁶ Erasmus's letter to the Rector of the University of Erfurt, July 31, 1518.

of the Renaissance than Luther believed in the spread of religion. Was it not better to correct little by little the old theology than to destroy it? Was it not better to keep it until the peaceable arrival of the new theology? Luther must take care of exaggerations of every kind: he must avoid provoking sedition. He has plainly warned us of many things; would to God he had done so with more moderation!¹

The benevolent neutrality Erasmus then assumed is indicated in his letter to Cardinal Wolsey.² He begins with complimenting his correspondent on what he has done for England, comparing him to Ptolemy Philadelphus for his patronage of learning and his collection of books. He is slandered and attacked for his connexion with Reuchlin and Luther. He went with the former to Frankfort, but has no connexion with him except the friendship of a fellow-countryman. Luther is quite unknown to him.³ Books on Pontifical remission, confession and penance first came out, the publishing of which he dissuaded, as the friends of Luther can bear witness. He gave no opinion of the subsequent swarm of books. He knows none of the learned Germans by sight except Eoban, Hutten and Beatus. He would think their freedom unbearable, did he not know how they have been provoked. Hutten's *Nemo*, which all know is ridiculous, the *Febris* and the speech of Peter Mosellanus, were ascribed to him. He advises them all to moderate their freedom of speech, and abstain from references to the heads of the Church. He would not have written on these subjects, had not a certain English "negotiator" asserted that all these calumnies were true. Wolsey will always find him faithful to Rome and Leo X.⁴

He tells Œcolampadius that "Luther's books were near being burnt in England; nor was there a remedy. The remedy came from a very humble friend, who was watchful at the right time. I cannot judge of the writings of Luther, but this tyranny pleases me in no wise."⁵ Of course this friend was the writer. In reply to a friendly letter of the reformer he complains of the attacks made upon him at Louvain as the

¹ Erasmus's letter to the Rector of the University of Erfurt, July 31, 1518.

² Some humanists asked Erasmus to protect Luther, Hess, 2, 39-45, 61-2, 552.

³ In letters to Pirkheimer and Leo X, he makes the same complaint, Jan. 26, 1517, 231 B (Le Clerc). This date is quite wrong. "Lutherus tam ignotus mihi, quam cui ignotissimus, nec adhuc vacavit hominis libros evolvere præter unam et alteram pagellam."

⁴ May 18, 1518. Richter argues strongly that this date is a year too early. Cf. his *Die Stellung des Erasmus zu Luther*. Allen agrees, II, 587.

⁵ June 14, 1520 (Le Clerc, 555 E).

alleged prime mover in the party of reform. He had replied that Luther was unknown to him, that he had not in fact read his books, and was therefore unable to express either approval or disapproval. As a matter of fact he was better acquainted with them than he allowed to appear. In 1519 he read the *Operationes in Psalmos*, and the following year the *Tessaradecas*. "I hold myself, as far as is possible, aloof that I may be of greater service to the revival of learning. More is gained by well-mannered modesty than by storming." He adds his usual admonitions to peaceableness and prudence, and, after some cautious expressions of praise and thanksgiving for his *Commentary on the Psalms*, at which he has been able to cast only a cursory glance, finally wishes him "a daily increase of the Spirit of Christ to His honour and the public weal."¹ This letter, however, did not serve the cause of quietness. To the Lutherans it seemed friendly, but not friendly enough. To their opponents it seemed filled with excessive cordiality.

In order to make his position clear Erasmus wrote several letters, including one to Archbishop Albert of Mayence on November 1, 1519. Although he was barely thirty this Archbishop was an Electoral Prince, Imperial Chancellor and Primate of the German Church. A cultivated scholar, Ulrich von Hutten sang his praises, and he was the friend of Erasmus. Before he fell under humanist influence, Albert took the side of Johann Pfefferkorn in his controversy with Johann Reuchlin. In 1516 and 1517 he endeavoured to organize a league of princes and towns, and its aim was the perpetual banishment of the Jews from Germany. He was as fervent an admirer of art and literature as Leo X himself, and his object was to make his Court of Mayence as much their home as the Court of Rome was. The Cathedral of Mayence was nearly as much to him as St. Peter's to Leo X. Sculptors and gold artificers gave of their best for its adornment. To music he was devoted, and singers came to Mayence from Rome itself. Artists like Albrecht Dürer and Matthäus Grünewald, miniature-painters like Beham and Glockendon, enriched his palace with their pictures. Archbishop Albert was an ardent admirer of what he termed the divine genius of Erasmus, and Erasmus in turn informed Reuchlin that the Archbishop was the "sole ornament of Germany in our age." Albert was as fortunate in his early promotion as Leo. At the age of twenty-six he was not only Bishop of Halberstadt and Archbishop of Magdeburg, but he was also Archbishop of Mayence and Primate of Germany.

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 2, p. 66 ff. The letter was printed a few weeks later.

In the letter of November 1, 1519, Erasmus admits the existence of "certain sparks of an excellent spirit" in Luther, "who is not striving after either honours or riches," and "at whose writings the best minds take no offence." Luther should not "be suppressed, but rather brought to a right frame of mind." He censures those who unfairly and publicly defame an honest man, who had only too just cause for his proceedings in the thousand abuses prevailing in ecclesiastical life and theology. Luther had depreciated indulgences, but had not Tetzel and his school claimed too much for them? He had spoken rashly about the papal power, but had not his opponents written just as rashly of it? He had despised the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, but had they not been placed almost above the Gospels? Here again he is careful to add his customary remark that he has not found time to peruse Luther's writings.¹ Through Hutten the letter reached the Archbishop, and Luther at once became acquainted with it. He called it an excellent letter which might well be printed. As a matter of fact, before giving it to Albert, Hutten had it printed, and, on his own responsibility, altered the name. "Luther," to the more significant "our Luther."² The burden of the message of the letter is the insane fear of new ideas. "In former days a heretic was listened to with respect; he was acquitted if he gave satisfaction, he was convicted if he persisted. The severest punishment was not to be admitted to the communion of the Catholic Church. Now the charge of heresy is quite another thing, and yet on any frivolous pretext whatever, they have this charge ready on their lips, 'It is heresy.' Formerly that man was considered a heretic who dissented from Evangelical teaching and from the articles of faith, or from those which had equal authority with them. . . . Whatever they do not like, whatever they do not understand is heresy; to know Greek is heresy; to have a polished style is heresy; to do other than they is heresy." It is easy for the monks to regard all their enemies as heretics, but is it true? Under this dreadful name they include the men of the new learning, who ardently desire to revive the classical spirit and the example of Christ, who

¹ Luther's letter to J. Lang, Jan. 26, 1520, *Briefwechsel*, 2, p. 305.

² Erasmus protested against "the more than Punic perfidy" with which he had been treated, Erasmus to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence, Oct. 8, 1520 (*Le Clerc*, 584 D). In a letter to Justus Jonas, May 10, 1521 (p. 642), Erasmus complains of the extracts from his books, translated into German and published by the Lutherans. Cf. Stichart, *Erasmus von Rotterdam*, 325; Kawerau, 10.

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wish to free thought on the one hand from ignorance and on the other from superstition.¹

Erasmus was not personally acquainted with Luther. Melanchthon approached the leader of the humanists, and by his praise endeavoured to secure a working alliance for his friend Luther.² In 1519, before Erasmus had taken the field against him, Luther had written to him, praising him, and, in the hope of obtaining his co-operation, had said, "You are our honour and the hope of our age, with whom I commune daily in the spirit. . . . Who is there into whose inner being Erasmus has not penetrated, whom does he not instruct, or over whom has he not established his sway? You are displeasing to many, but therein I discern the gifts of our gracious God. . . . With these words, barbarous as they are, I would fain pay homage to the excellence of your mind to which we, all of us, are indebted. . . . Please look on me as a humble brother in Christ, who is wholly devoted to you and loves you dearly."³

On April 14, 1519, Erasmus wrote from Antwerp to Frederick, the able Elector of Saxony, saying that of Luther's writings he had so far read only certain extracts.⁴ Every one, he said, who had religion at heart read these books with the greatest sympathy.⁵ "All who were conversant with his life approved of it, since he was above every suspicion of ambition. The purity of his character is such that he even wins over the heathen. No one has shown his error or refuted him, and yet they call him a heretic."⁶ Therefore he presses the Elector, the most powerful of the German princes, not to abandon an innocent man to malicious persons. This pressure secured for Luther comparative peace during the critical years of 1519,

¹ Erasmus's letter to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence, *Epist.*, 477, 517 B, Nov. 1, 1519. Cf. *Corp. Reform.*, I, 77 ff.; Hutten, *Opp.*, I, 167; Seckendorff, I, 96; Seifert, *Einführung der Reformation*, 40 ff.; Stichart, *Erasmus*, 308 ff.; Woker, *De Erasmi Rotterdami studiis irenicis* (Paderborn, 1872), 20 ff.

² Melanchthon's letter to Erasmus, Jan. 5, 1519, *Corp. Reform.*, I, p. 59: "Martinus Luther studiosissimus nominis tui, per omnia tibi probari cupit." Allen, III, 467.

³ Luther's letter to Erasmus, March 28, 1519, *Briefwechsel*, I, p. 489 ff.; De Wette, I, pp. 247-9; Allen, III, 516. Cf. Evers, 2, 203-6; Stichart, 305-9.

⁴ On this letter cf. Richter, *Erasmus u. seine Stellung zu Luther* (Leipzig, 1907), 10 ff. For the relations of Erasmus with Frederick cf. Hartfelder in *Zs. f. vergl. Litteraturgesch.*, N.F., iv (1891), 203-14.

⁵ Hess, II, pp. 30-6; Allen, III, 527.

⁶ Cf. the letter he wrote to the Rector of the University of Erfurt, July 31, 1518: "Luther had given some excellent advice, had he but gone to work more gently. As to the value of his doctrines, I neither can nor wish to express any opinion," *Opp.*, III, p. 334. Cf. also the letters to Campeggio, Dec. 6, 1520 (Le Clerc, 594 B) and to Leo X, Sept. 13, 1520, *ibid.*, p. 578 B.

1520, and 1521, and he expressed his gratitude in no measured terms.¹ This letter did not weaken the determination of the prince to persist in his protection of Luther. If Frederick protected him, who was to execute either the ban of the Empire or the excommunication which the Church might launch against him?

In an interview on December 5, 1520, the Elector Frederick asked Erasmus if Luther had erred in his preaching or his writing. Erasmus smiled at first, and then, as Spalatin relates, replied, "Yes, in two things. He has attacked the Pope in his crown and the monks in their bellies."² The scholar favoured the hearing of Luther and the court chaplain, Spalatin, and the electoral councillor begged him to place his views on paper. He returned to his lodgings in Cologne, and wrote the *Axiomata Erasmi*.³ The substance of these axioms is:

That the whole fight against Luther sprang from hatred of the classics and from tyrannical ignorance.

That good men and lovers of the Gospel were those who had taken the least offence at Luther.

That they were much disturbed by the cruelty of the Bull so unworthy of the mild and merciful Vicar of Jesus Christ.

That two universities had indeed condemned Luther, but had not confuted him.

That Luther made a very reasonable demand by offering to dispute once more.

That his request to be tried by disinterested judges was very moderate.

That he could not be suspected of evil designs, since he sought for no profit and advantage to himself, and that he was less to be suspected of heresy.

That they who condemned him deserved to be condemned themselves for advancing propositions offensive to pious ears.

That the Pope was more solicitous about his own glory than about the honour of Jesus Christ.

That the treatises hitherto written against Luther were disapproved even by those who dissented from Luther.

That the world was thirsting for evangelical truth, and that such a general disposition was not to be checked and oppressed.

That it was very improper for Charles to begin the exercise of his imperial power with inauspicious acts of severity and violence.

¹ Luther's letter to Spalatin, May 22, 1519 (De Wette). Cf. *Werke*, Erl. ed., 2, p. 460.

² *Posthumous Works of Spalatin*, p. 164.

³ *Lutheri Op. Latina*, 5, pp. 241-2. Cf. Richter, 21; P. Kalkoff, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* (1904), 9.

Erasmus put forth his view that Luther ought to be tried by competent and unprejudiced judges, and that the authority of the Church was not the way to settle the matter. There was nothing to be gained by an appeal to the Emperor, for he was surrounded by sophists and papists.¹ Erasmus was afraid that Aleander, the papal legate, might read his *Axiomata*, and he begged Spalatin to return it. Spalatin did so, but, to the disquietude of the humanist, they shortly afterwards appeared, perhaps with alterations, in print. The hope entertained was that their appearance might compromise the humanist who was standing aloof. The gain of Hutten to the cause of Luther had assisted the cause of the reformer. What might he not anticipate if Erasmus stood as openly on his side as he stood secretly?

Perhaps Erasmus defended Luther more stoutly than is sometimes realized. It may well be, as Kalkoff contends, that he wrote the *Acta Academiæ Lovaniensis contra Lutherum*.² It is certain that he interested himself on the reformer's behalf in his letters to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence, in 1519 and 1520. Did he not inform the Archbishop that "Luther had admirable insight into the Gospel"? He wrote to Cardinal Campeggio, to the councillors of Charles V, of Leo X, and of Henry VIII. To the Elector Frederick of Saxony he submitted a favourable judgment.³ In November 1520 he spoke on Luther's behalf to the Elector at Cologne and sent a letter to Spalatin.

The intervention is the better worth dwelling on when we consider that from the end of 1519 onwards Luther was suspected as the heresiarch. In spite of this attitude Erasmus prescribed the use of moderation and exposed the ignorance, hatred and perfidy of certain of the foremost in the attack. True, Luther is violent, but has he not been provoked by the violence of his enemies? He asks for a discussion and receives insult. In spite of the silence of Rome, he is condemned. His opponents distort his thought, falsify his writings, and, instead of a proper reply, they attack his character. The Mazzolinis and the Alfelds merely oppose their syllogisms to solid proofs taken from the Bible. Monks and doctors try to stifle his voice, to suppress his books, and to suppress their author. "Heretic! Antichrist! Apostate!"—this is their cry. The pulpits, the schools, the public places resound with anathemas. It is the quarrel of Reuchlin over again, with the same proceed-

¹ Cf. Luther's letter to Spalatin, Feb. 27, 1531, De Wette, I, p. 562: "Olim Erasmus scripsit, nihil esse spei in Carolo, sophistis et papistis obsesso."

² Kalkoff, *Die Vermittlungspolitik des Erasmus*.

³ April 14, 1519, Allen, III, 527.

ings, the same terror. By threatening Luther they simply make him bold, by trying to crush him they raise him. Force accomplishes nothing.¹ The method of striking him down is unreasonable. With reforms, with care, with justice, what would they not have accomplished ?²

At the end of 1520 Erasmus can still declare that he has only read ten or twelve pages of the writings of the man he saves from persecution.³ On April 22, 1519, he writes from Louvain to the moderate Melancthon, the balance-wheel of Luther and Lutheranism, saying that "Luther's life is approved by every one here : opinions differ concerning his learning. . . . Luther has rightly found fault with some things. Would that he had done so with a success equal to his courage !" His letters to England are in the same strain. "All are agreed in praise of this man's life. It is in itself no small matter that his conduct is so blameless that even his enemies can find nothing with which to reproach him."⁴ He is for the present preserving peace, which is ever in Erasmus's eyes the greatest of blessings. He was preserving peace, and he was also gaining disciples. To the younger men, if not to the older, he was a prophet, revealing their aspirations to themselves, and making them conscious of their position. At Heidelberg Brenz, Bucer and Schnepf; at Mayence Hedio and Capito; and at Augsburg Œcolampadius, Conrad Peutinger and Bernard Adelmann were thus attracted. At Leipzig, Peter Mosellanus finds that "all the studious youths are eager in their pursuit of sacred literature."⁵ The religious enthusiasm of the new movement, and the scorn of the younger humanists for scholasticism, combined with the indignation of the people against the exactions of the Roman See, against the vices of the clergy, and against the degradation of Germany by its submission to Italy. As Hutten in Germany and Berquin in France had understood the function of the pamphlet in creating public opinion, so Luther began to see that booklets in German couched in popular language were

¹ Erasmus's letter to the Rector of Louvain, Oct. 18, 1520, 585 E. Cf. F. O. Stichert's *Erasmus von Rotterdam*, pp. 327, 331. Cf. his letter to Campeggio, Dec. 6, 1520, p. 595.

² Erasmus's letter to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence, Nov. 1, 1519, 513 D; to Marlian, March 25, 1520, 543 E, and to Chierigato, Sept. 13, 1520, 579 D.

³ Frederick of Saxony's letter to Luther, May 30, 1519 (Seckendorf).

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Cardinal Wolsey, May 18, 1519: "Hominis vita magno omnium consensu probatus," *Opp.*, III, p. 322, Allen III, 587. To Leo X he writes, Sept. 13, 1520: "Bonis igitur illius (Luther) favi . . . immo gloriæ Christi in illo favi," 578 B. Cf. Völker, *Toleranz und Intoleranz*, 175.

⁵ Tentzel, *Reliquæ Epp. Mutiana*, p. 43.

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admirably calculated to assist his propaganda against Tetzels and his like. Booklets, using satire and abuse, might employ not trains of argument but plain reasons, not heavy discussions but ideas easy to embody in catchwords and formulas.¹

The fervent convictions of Erasmus are expressed in his letter to Louis Marlian, Bishop of Tuy, the counsellor of the Emperor: "The Roman Church I know which I think does not differ from the Catholic. Death will not part me from it unless the Church openly departs from Christ. I always abhor sedition, and I would that Luther and the Germans abhorred it equally. . . . I have not deviated in what I have written one hair's-breadth from those who agree with the Catholic Church. . . . I feared always that revolution would be the end, and I would have done more had I not been afraid that I might be found fighting against the Spirit of Christ."² "I shall join myself to Luther when I shall see him take the part of the Catholic Church."³ This attitude never altered. In January 1524 he told a friend in Bohemia who was anxious to see him take the side of the reformer: "I shall be for him if he is for the Church."⁴ Like Savonarola, he places defection from the Catholic Church in the same category with defection from Jesus. *Christum agnosco*, such was his famous answer, *Lutherum non novi*.⁵

The material considerations were valuable. "If I consent to refute Luther," he told Gerard of Nimeguen, "a bishopric is mine."⁶ In November 1520, the Roman curia through Marino Caraccioli and Geronimo Aleander renewed the offer of the bishopric. Aleander was one of the most learned men of his day, and he was an envoy likely to please the fastidious Erasmus.⁷ Aleander possessed capacity in conceiving thoughts, and no less ability in communicating them: he was more humanist than theologian. In his lectures at Paris he succeeded in attracting two thousand students of all classes. "Luther is so great," replied Erasmus, "that I shall not write

¹ Böcking, *Hutteni Op.*, II, pp. 12-21; Schade, *Satiren und Pasquille aus der Reformationszeit*, 2, 1 ff., 109 ff., 113, 124, 153; 3, 48, 196 ff., 198, 206.

² Erasmus's letter to Marlian, March 25, 1520, 543 E; *Epist.*, d i, 543 E. Le Clerc's date is wrong, for Marlian's reply is dated April 7, 1521.

³ Erasmus's letter to N, Jan. 28, 1521, 632 D.

⁴ *Erasmii Opera*, III, p. 633.

⁵ Cf. Erasmus's letter to the Bishop of Palencia, April 21, 1522, p. 713: "Ab Ecclesiæ Catholicæ consortio nec mors distrahet, nec vita."

⁶ Erasmus's letter to Gerard of Nimeguen, Sept. 9, 1520, 577 D.

⁷ On Aleander's attitude to reform cf. Balan, 31, 73, 78-9; Brieger, 28, 47-9, 73; Friedrich, 95-9, 107, 113. On his views on excommunication cf. Brieger, 51 ff.; Friedrich, 115 f.

against him. He is so great that I do not understand him : his value is such that I derive more instruction from a single small page of his than from the whole of St. Thomas.”¹ Of course to Aleander this afforded convincing proof that the humanist was a Lutheran, all the more dangerous since he refused to show himself in his true colours. Erasmus protested eloquently against the harsh measures adopted towards the reformer. Perhaps Luther can be crushed, but can truth ? The learned, who alone are able, ought to decide the issue by their books.² On the eve of Luther's break with Rome, Erasmus informs Leo X of the life and work of the reformer, and he tells Cardinal Campeggio that “Luther . . . has received rare talents from nature, a genius wonderfully adapted to explain the obscurities of the Bible, making the light of the Gospel flash forth. . . . His life was praised by those who did not share his doctrines. . . . Therefore I have been favourable to Luther : I say favourable rather less to Luther than to the glory of Christ.”³

It is abundantly clear, then, that in the year 1519 Erasmus refuses to commit himself definitely to the Lutheran side. He begins to suspect its effects on humanism. These suspicions were deepened in 1523 and 1524.⁴ Another cause of the refusal to come forward is that his own methods had not been unsuccessful. His satire and his learning had cured, or at least mitigated, some of the diseases from which the Church had been suffering. What the *Moriae Encomium* had done in one direction his edition of the New Testament and his editions of the Fathers had done in another. Literary culture was the great weapon, and was not its edge being blunted by such extremists as Luther, a man of thirty-six ?⁵ The moderate man, standing aloof from the controversies of the moment, was the one able to take a wide view, able to compose the differences which Luther exaggerated. Erasmus regretted to note how many young scholars were deserting letters for Lutheranism. The young reformer possessed that enthusiasm of youth which inevitably attracted more promising minds of the humanist party than the cooler zeal of its head. Erasmus could not help

¹ Responsum Friderici, Ducis Saxoniae Electoris, *Lutheri Opera*, ed. Jena, 1600, 2, p. 315.

² Erasmus's letter to Marlian, April 7, 1521, 636 B ; Schmidt, 54 ; *Corp. Reform.*, II, 287.

³ Erasmus's letter to Campeggio, Dec. 6, 1520, 596. Cf. his letter to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence, Nov. 1, 1519, *Epist.*, 514 D.

⁴ Cf. Luther's letters to Vives, Dec. 27, 1524, p. 841 ; to Pirkheimer, Jan. 8, 1525, p. 247.

⁵ In the year 1519.

knowing that the theological element in Luther's movement tended to overbear every other. He felt afraid of the fiery earnestness, the burning ardour of soul, the absolute disregard of consequences which are necessary to engineer a revolution in religion. We cannot all be all things. He could not be a master in literature, a king of learning, and at the same time a director of a revolution. He was now in his fifty-third year, an age when a man was much older than now. The portraits of Henry VII indicate extreme age in the wasted form, yet he was only fifty-two when he died. Francis I died at fifty-three, Charles V at fifty-nine, and Maximilian at sixty. Louis XII was not fifty-four when he passed away an absolute wreck. There was so much crowded into a few years then that the excitement of it all told heavily upon mind and body. The boundlessness and the endlessness of the controversy forcibly impressed itself on the mind of Erasmus. The Church no doubt required reform. Still, it was good enough for him, and he did not want to see such a doctrine as justification added to its creed as *de fide*.

An additional cause of the result is that the common objects of the humanist and the prophet had been in some measure attained, and now their divergent aims loomed on the horizon. They had jointly attacked the domination of Aristotle and Aquinas. They had asserted the claims of reason against authority. The normal hindrances to humanism and reform had at first more things in common than those in which they differed. Time changed the place of emphasis, and they came to have more in which they differed. The breach was inevitable. Erasmus tells Melanchthon,¹ Cardinal Campeggio,² Justus Jonas³—who aimed at a complete breach with the past—and Leonard Prichard⁴ that he does not belong to the movement for reform, remaining too faithful to the cause of Catholicism to be dragged into any excesses. Many like Eck, Emser and Cochläus loved sound learning, and yet turned the cold face of neutrality to Luther. Of this attitude of Erasmus Luther is painfully aware. He prefers for the moment to believe that he who was not against him was on his part. The common friends, Melanchthon and Spalatin, would doubtless preserve outwardly courteous relations between the two men.⁵ It is plain, however,

¹ Erasmus's letter to Melanchthon, April 22, 1519, Allen, III, 539.

² Erasmus's letter to Campeggio, May 1, 1519, Allen, III, 573.

³ Erasmus's letters to Jonas, June 1, 1519, Allen, III, 611, and May 10, 1521, 639 A; Bezold, 639 ff.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Prichard, July 1, 1519, 467 A.

⁵ Luther's letter to Laz. Spengler, Nov. 17, 1520, De Wette.

that in the future the best to be hoped was benevolent neutrality: there was no longer the possibility of an alliance. In the "drama" about to begin, Erasmus means to be simply a "spectator."¹ "I am neither Luther's accuser, nor his advocate, nor his judge," was his cold answer to Archbishop Albert of Mayence.²

Much water had flowed under the bridge since Erasmus set out on his mission of reform: it had left him unaltered. "I have always," he told Joachim Camerarius, "written, have always thought the same things."³ There are perhaps some excesses in the *Praise of Folly*, he writes to Cardinal Wolsey, which he now might put differently.⁴ His aim in 1522 is the one he had kept before him all his life: "We must restore the kingdom of God, that is, evangelical doctrine."⁵ To a Bohemian noble who kept pressing him to enter the Lutheran ranks, he merely replies: "If there is anything good in his works, I gather it; if there is anything bad, I pass it by."⁶ He was one of those men, to use Goethe's words, who draw back in terror at the sight of the spirits they have evoked. If for the moment he was neutral, other humanists assumed an attitude of hostility. The learned lawyer, Ulrich Zasius, had been a warm supporter of Luther, but he was shocked when his leader attacked the divine appointment of the Pope and the infallibility of the Council.⁷ Once Conrad Mutianus acclaimed Luther as another Hus, the "morning star of Wittenberg," yet he came to regard him as one "who had all the fury of a madman."⁸ Mutianus's pupil, Crotus Rubianus, broke away when Luther bitterly attacked the authority of the Church.⁹

The phase of strife between humanism and reform was in sight, for Luther was beginning to feel strong enough to challenge the supremacy of old conceptions and to declare them incompatible with the new. Luther succeeds Erasmus; La Placc, Galileo; Voltaire, Descartes; Danton, Mirabeau; Strauss, Reimarus; and Huxley, Darwin.

¹ Erasmus's letter to Reuchlin, Nov. 8, 1520: "Ego hujus fabulæ spectator esse malim, quam histrio," p. 590 A.

² Erasmus's letter to Albert, Archbishop of Mayence, Nov. 1, 1519, p. 514. Cf. Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, I, 674 ff.

³ Erasmus's letter to Camerarius, Dec. 16, 1524, p. 840 C.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Wolsey, May 18, 1519, Allen, III, 967.

⁵ *Paraph.*, *Opp.*, VII, Matt. vi. 33, p. 41.

⁶ Jan. 28, 1521, p. 632.

⁷ Riegger, *Zasii, Epist.*, 4.

⁸ Kampschulte, 2, pp. 227-32; Krause, *Der Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*, LXI, LXIV.

⁹ Kampschulte, I, 210; 2, p. 139 n.; *de Croto Rubiano*, 12 ff.; *Luther's Briefe*, 2, 307, 313; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 613.

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The peace, then, between Erasmus and Luther, the two indefatigable workers, was not destined to endure. How could the calm old theologian and the fiery young one remain long in agreement? The one dreamt of a peaceful Renaissance, the other of a religious revolution. They were at one in execrating the monks, in hating the abuses of the Church, in detesting stupidity, and in caring as humanists to return to the authentic texts of the Bible.¹ Both were aristocratic in their tone of thought.² Erasmus trusted that some day the light of knowledge might penetrate the minds of the people, but the people were entirely unfitted to discuss the matters at issue: decision was to be the prerogative of the universities. Luther thought so much of the faithful that he bestowed little thought on his ordinary adherents. "Three classes do not belong to the evangel at all, and to them we do not preach. . . . Away with the dissolute swine." The three classes put outside the pale were first the "rude hearts" who "will not accept the evangel nor observe its behests"; secondly, "coarse knaves steeped in great vices" who would not allow themselves to fall under the influence of the message; thirdly, "the worst of all, who, in addition to this, even dare to persecute the evangel." The Gospel is, then, intended only for "simple souls . . . and to none others have we preached."³ Asked in 1540 how to act to those who had never been inside a church for twenty years, he answers, "Let them go to the devil, and, when they die, pitch them on the manure-heap."

"Piety," Erasmus thought, "requires that we should sometimes conceal truth, that we should take care not to show it always, as if it did not matter when, where or to whom we show it. . . . Perhaps we must admit with Plato that lies are useful to the people."⁴ It was simple folly to consult *boi polloi* on the points raised.⁵ The scholars, the humanists, the theologians were fitted: how could others possibly be? Then the next step was to convince the bishops and the princes step by step through reason and patience.

Erasmus blames the rank and file for the decline of faith in Christianity. They have deformed and lowered religion to their

¹ Eoban of Hesse compared them:

"Ante quidem vidit mundoque ostendit Erasmus,
Sæcula quo cernunt doctius ista nihil.
Quam fecisse igitur velut est missus ostendisse,
Lutherus meriti grandius instar habet."

² Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 588.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., II², p. 245 ff. Contrast Lessing, *Axiomata* (1778).

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Marlian, March 25, 1520, p. 545 E.

⁵ Cf. his letter to Justus Jonas, May 10, 1521, p. 640.

level; they have, on a vigorous and healthy tree, grafted artificial branches which risk the destruction of the sap. In a word, the people have inspired the most dreadful customs of life and thought.¹ He plainly told John Colet that he wrote the *Enchiridion* "ad hoc solum ut mederer errori vulgo religionem constituentium in ceremoniis et observationibus plusquam Judaicis."² The *Colloquies* are just as outspoken as the *Enchiridion* against the vulgar religion introduced by the barbarians of the time or by the coarseness of the mass. The artisan was as far removed from the citizen of Athens as an ordinary man from the citizen of the New Jerusalem. The multitude have the religion of the Saints, Compostella or St. Peter's, Jerusalem or Christopher, George, Barbara, Apollonia. "What is the difference between these customs and the pagans who vow to Mercury the tenth part of their goods in order to be enriched, or a cock to Æsculapius in order to be healed?" In the worship of the saints, "what becomes of the Divinely appointed Mediator, Christ? To await Him is salvation, is religion: it is simple superstition to await either Saints or Angels." What have the rites and ceremonies which the multitude esteem so highly, what have external observances, to do with a pure life?

In spite of this measure of agreement, how could the exact scholar approve of the brutality of the language of the reformer? His comprehension of the past, especially the past of antiquity, was as wide as his knowledge of it. To Erasmus, moreover, there were shades and degrees, but to Luther there were none. The former will cite the Fathers: the latter himself. Erasmus will study the Fathers in order to understand the Bible: Luther, like Lefèvre d'Étaples, will believe in his own inspiration. Erasmus would have agreed far more closely than Luther with Lessing that the search for truth was of more value than truth. The one was essentially a teacher: the other was no less essentially a prophet. Luther was aglow with enthusiasm, alive with faith, eloquent in speech, dreaming dreams and seeing visions. Luther had the greater heart while the coldness of the cloister clung to Erasmus. Erasmus had the greater brain. The reformer's own verdict was that he had matter without words—therein he wronged himself—while Erasmus had words without matter. Erasmus was the mouthpiece of what most men were thinking, and

¹ *Enchiridion*, c. 8, 6: "Vulgus sunt, quicumque in specu illo platonico vincti suis affectibus inanes rerum imagines pro verissimis rebus admirantur. . . . Ego vulgum non loco sed pectore metior."

² *Epist.*, I, p. 405; Dec. 1504 (Allen).

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Luther, like Rousseau, was the voice of what others were feeling. The one was a calm philosopher, the other a fiery fanatic. Evolution was the way of Erasmus: revolution proved the way of Luther. The binding tie with the past inspires the one: it makes no appeal to the other. To Erasmus there was no weapon equal to persuasion. At the end of the Directory that man of thought, the Abbé Sieyès, feeling his powerlessness, exclaimed, "I need a sword," a need Erasmus never experienced. His breadth was his weakness at the time, but his strength with the generations to come. The narrowness of Luther was his strength at the time, but his weakness with the generations to come. He possessed that robust dogmatism, that strong conviction, which is utterly alien to the temperament of the scholar. Erasmus doubtless wished he were as sure of some things as Luther was of everything. It was emphatically by faith that Luther obtained a good report: it was no less emphatically by works that Erasmus trusted to obtain a good report. Luther wished to defend what he had attacked, and attack what he had defended, whereas Erasmus had not altered his position. He still, as he told Pirkheimer, cultivated his field.¹ To the latter the interpretation of the Bible was difficult, and more than one interpretation was possible, but such a point of view was out of the question for a man who had to offer wellnigh infallible guidance to his followers. The moderation of the attitude of Erasmus, the candour of soul combined with the reserves of his mind left him without controlling power over the crowd. Leadership in his case was not forthcoming. The one employed the popularity of the pulpit, the other the seclusion of the study. Erasmus had studied the world of books, but had he studied the book of the world? The history of Erasmus is the history of a mind: the history of Luther is the history of a man. Religious progress is for the one clearness: for the other it is enrichment. The one believes in a revelation perfect and complete: the other believes in a revelation slow and gradual. The light Luther derived from the sacred record must be absolutely pellucid. The summer haze that surrounds all great thought was not for him.

From the very first there have been two tendencies in Christianity. One of them looks inward, surveying the individual soul and its relations with God. The other looks out-

¹ Erasmus's letter to Pirkheimer, Sept. 5, 1520, 575 D. Cf. his letter to G. de Brie, p. 905 C: "Video seculum hoc ad Scythicam quandam barbariem tendere."

ward, fixing its eye on the membership of the individual in the body, regarding the Church as an institution. The one is the Lutheran type just as much as the other is the Erasmian type. According to Luther natural reason, apart from the Holy Spirit, is without knowledge: in divine matters man is in complete darkness. The essence of man's condition is sin, and man is only sin. Belief meant to Luther the losing of individuality in God, the submission of man's liberty to His absolute will, thereby creating in spite of himself a dualism. To Erasmus it meant the realization of all man's ideals in God, the union of faith and action, the essential oneness of all our intellectual and moral forces. Long before Pascal, Erasmus held with him that there are *deux excès*: *exalter la nature ou la condamner*. The humanists tended so much to make reason dictator in religion that Luther desired to banish it entirely from religion. As a Christian Erasmus did not believe in the natural goodness of man, though as a humanist he equally did not believe in his utter corruption. Experience, he thought, is decisively against the view that man's nature is totally depraved. Erasmus strove towards some better unity of all the facts given by nature, revelation and history. The faith which seizes cannot, he saw, be set in permanent opposition to the reason which verifies: all truth is one, and he endeavoured so to grasp it. There was a passing want of harmony between the conceptions of the past and the knowledge—the knowledge achieved by the Erasmian method—but that was all. The theology of Luther had been formed by a blending of mysticism and Austinianism; that of Erasmus is a blending of Churchmanship and humanity. Luther is a disciple of Jesus. Erasmus is a disciple of Jesus and also of Plato. He does not—nay, he cannot—separate his faith from a general theory of the universe. The mind of Luther embraces God and the justification of man. The mind of Erasmus embraces this and an intellectual system as well. The reformer requires the certainty of his salvation, the humanist the certainty of truth. Luther, like so many reformers, e.g. John Calvin and Calvin's precursor, Guillaume Farel, attributed his conversion to a sudden revelation. Erasmus believed in progressive, not sudden, revelations.

The attitude of the two men towards human nature was altogether divergent. Each was the counterpart, the supplement of the other. What might not have been the forward step taken by toleration had they been able to combine? Why could not the wisdom of Erasmus be joined to the force of Luther? The one was Hellenic, the other Hebraic. Erasmus

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was a great humanist, Luther a great human being. To explain God in terms of human thought seemed to Luther the mark of a criminal and diabolical pride. To trust in one's self, in reason, in knowledge, seemed to him stark presumption. Reason was not a support in our present state of ignorance, but a dangerous seducer. Accordingly Luther humiliated this "harlot of the devil" whom the humanists enthroned as the queen of our conduct. To Luther the sacrifice of the intellect was the condition of feeling the power of God, while to Erasmus its complete blending with the soul was the way to catholic truth. We must distinguish, according to Luther, between our relations with God and our relations with the world. In the first capacity the Holy Spirit reigns, and Reason is only a courtesan (*Frau Hulda*). In the second capacity Luther recognizes the share taken by reason.¹ In the last he separates nature and grace just as Albrecht Ritschl separated science and theology, for Ritschlianism traces its rise to this separation of Luther. In consequence of this position the reformer regards the witness of the Holy Spirit not as internal, because He does not come from us, but as external because He proceeds from God.

Luther is anxious to offer up to God will, intellect, and activity as a reasonable sacrifice. As for the first we are able to will, thanks to the grace of God. We must destroy our reason in order to be born of the Spirit, in order that we may be in union with God. We regard our activity as the good works our faith has accomplished, subtly suggesting that they are a proof of our own strength. Let God and God alone work in our soul. So, proclaims the mystic, we shall lose ourselves only to find ourselves, we shall die in order to live. We shall be perfect when we realize we are only an instrument, the harp which gives forth divine harmony under the touch of the musician. The dominant thought is that our salvation depends not on us, but on the grace and goodness of God. The narrowness of the conception, its extreme pessimism, the exclusion of man's participation, is evident. What can man, contends Luther, accomplish when his nature is totally corrupt, and when concupiscence is tyrannous? This position is in part a reaction against the intellectualism of the humanists. Against reason he places mystery, against pride in our powers he insists on the action of Divine grace.

Erasmus believed in the personality of man; the other in the overpowering mastery of the Creator. The one believed in the free will of man: the other believed in the omnipotence of

¹ Cf. Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, 2, pp. 244-5.

God. The one conceived that man might turn to God, the other that God might turn the heart of man. In the mind of the one there was doubt solved in one form only to come up in another. Erasmus could agree with Socrates that there was only one thing he knew, and that was that he knew nothing. Luther could also agree with Socrates when the sage announced his consciousness of a special divine mission, communicated to him by his dæmon or genius in the shape of prohibitory commands. In the mind of Luther there was complete conviction. His lips spoke knowledge, but was it not inspired by God Himself? He was in the habit of declaring that he had "not merely received his teaching from heaven, but on behalf of one who had more power in his little finger than a thousand popes, kings, princes and doctors."¹ In his furious reply "Against King Henry of England" he claims his position as a messenger of God.² "Christ through me has begun His revelations of the abomination in the Holy Place."² "I am certain that I have my dogmas from heaven."³ "I am enlightened by the Spirit: He is my teacher."⁴ With this belief in his inspiration it was almost impossible for him to tolerate differences of opinion. Nor was his conviction in any wise singular. Origen felt he possessed personal illumination.⁵ Anselm claimed a direct revelation: "as God disclosed it to me" was his phrase. Joan of Arc believed in divine voices which guided her actions.

How could Erasmus approve of the attempt to bind the cause of humanism to that of the reformation? "They mix the cause of letters," he told Wolsey, "with the affair of Reuchlin and Luther, but they are also independent of each other."⁶ The attack upon humanism he could forgive, but he could never forget the fact that his opponent was practically denying that the Renaissance was Christian. "These people will not be quiet," he thought, "until they have succeeded in destroying good literature."⁷ Moreover, the public was ceasing to be interested in Erasmus or in classical studies. Great publishers, like Rynmann at Augsburg, and the brothers Atlansee at Vienna, found there was no demand for scholarly

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, pp. 228-38, 346, in his reply to Henry VIII, 1522. Cf. his letter to Melanchthon, Jan. 13, 1522, *Briefwechsel*, 3, pp. 272-3.

² *Contra Henricum regem Angliæ*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 220; Erl. ed., 6, p. 445.

³ *Ibid.*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 184.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 540; Erl. ed., 5, p. 74.

⁵ *In Levit. Hom.*, VIII; Rosenmüller, III, p. 146.

⁶ May 18, 1519; Allen, III, 589.

⁷ Erasmus's letter to Gerard of Nimeguen, Sept. 9, 1520, 577 D.

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editions. At the same time the dealers in pamphlets were carrying on a larger business than ever. Caricatures and satires were eagerly bought. In Nürnberg, for example, the regular booksellers starved while the shopkeepers prospered by their sale of the fleeting booklet. These the lads in the streets and the hawkers in country districts distributed, and they proved no mean source of power to the Lutherans.¹ The expense of printing daunted Froben from publishing the works of Polydore Vergil, for nothing now sold in Germany except the writings of the reformer.² He was no more inclined to print the books of Vives for exactly the same reason, adding that at the fair of Frankfort he had not sold a single copy of Erasmus's edition of the *De Civitate Dei*.³ Vives informed the humanist king that the Lutheran controversy had put a stop to the production of ancient books in Germany.⁴ The classical authors, so much studied before the advent of the prophet, had now as few readers as before the Renaissance. Men forsook Homer and Virgil for the Bible, especially for St. Paul. Erfurt had 311 students in 1520: in 1521 there were 120, in 1522 only 72, and in 1527 their number had dwindled to 14. Some betook them to business, which was more profitable than scholarship: At Freiburg in 1523 Ulrich Zasius had only six listeners to his law lectures, and even these were Frenchmen.⁵ The Senate of Heidelberg complained that there were at the university more professors than students.⁶ In 1540, however, Melanchthon expressed his satisfaction with the state of learning. There were 2000 students at Wittenberg in 1550.⁷ The number of students at the University of Leipzig between 1508 and 1522 was 6485, and between 1523 and 1537 only 1935.⁸ At Wittenberg the number from 1521 to 1530 fell from 245 to 174, and for the same period from 123 to 33 at the University of

¹ O. Hase, *Die Koburger, Buchändler-Familie in Nürnberg*, p. 71; A. Kirchhoff, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels*, I, pp. 79-102; C. Otto, *J. Cochläus der Humanist*, pp. 117, 131. Cf. Erasmus's *Colloquies*, *Opp.*, IV, pp. 777, 824, 842.

² Erasmus's letter to Virgil, 1523, p. 777 E.

³ Erasmus's letter to Vives, Dec. 27, 1524, p. 841 F.

⁴ Vives's letter to Erasmus, Nov. 13, 1525, *Epist.*, 13, App. (ed. 1642), 899 E.

⁵ Stintzing, *Ulrich Zasius*, pp. 249-50.

⁶ Hautz, *Gesch. der Universität Heidelberg*, p. 390; Kampschulte, *Übersicht der jährlichen Immatriculation*, II, p. 219. Cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., 30, 2, p. 550; Erl. ed., 17³, p. 399.

⁷ *Corp. Reform.*, 3, p. 1068.

⁸ Zarncke, *Die urkundlichen Quellen zur Gesch. der Universität Leipzig*, *Abhand. der königl. sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, III, pp. 594, 597. Seidemann, *Reformationszeit*, 38; his *Karl von Miltitz*, 27; and his *Erläuterungen zur Reformationsgeschichte*, 27; Siefert, *Die Reformationszeit in Leipzig*, 65 ff.

Rostock,¹ and at Frankfort from 73 to 32. At Cologne in 1516 there were 370 undergraduates ; in 1521, 251, and in 1527, 72.²

Hellenists, Latinists and Hebraists bewailed the indifference of the rising generation to the finest works of antiquity.³ With grave trouble humanism had scattered "the Gothic and more than Cimmerian mist," but was it to reappear? Scholar after scholar deserted the Muses for Lutheran tracts. Mutianus's vision of Beata Tranquillitas had vanished. So long as the Reformation increased the emancipation wrought by the Renaissance, Luther aided it with his great authority. Soon, however, he understood that this agreement could not last, that the moment the theological quarrels penetrated the minds of the masses and divided Germany into two camps the seeds of the dissolution of the alliance were sown. Luther ceased to care for knowledge, save in so far as it bore on the love of God. Like St. Paul, he was willing to esteem lightly the wisdom of men as compared with the foolishness of the cross. Pragmatic to the heart, he did not value learning for its own sake. Proclaiming the emptiness of knowledge, apart from theology, he proclaimed at the same moment the divorce of Erasmus from his side. The latter saw his scholars transformed into pamphleteers, appealing to the people in their own tongue.

¹ Krabbe, *Die Universität Rostock, im 15 und 16. Jahrhundert*, pp. 290-3, 372, 387.

² *Zeitschrift des Bergischen Geschichtsvereins*, VI, p. 208. On the whole question cf. F. Eulenburg, *Über die Frequenz der deutschen Universitäten in früherer Zeit. Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, Bd. 13 (1897), p. 525 ff. Barge (I, p. 419) gives the following table :

	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
	1520	1521	1522	1523	1524	1525
Heidelberg . .	—	139	130	76	63	37
Köln . .	—	251	218	160	169	120
Erfurt . .	311	120	72	34	24	21
Leipzig . .	—	339	285	124	90	102
Rostock . .	—	116	137	60	51	26
Griesswald . .	—	38	27	15	47	(Closed to 1539)
Freiburg . .	—	171	87	79	32	22
Ingolstadt . .	—	69	150	133	98	73
Tübingen . .	—	147	166	110	76	52
Wittenberg . .	579	245	285	198	170	171
Frankfort a. O. .	—	73	94	42	47	28
	Year	Year	Year			
	1526	1527	1528			
Rostock . .	9	10	17			
Wittenberg . .	76	73				

³ Cf. Melancthon, *Corp. Reform.*, I, pp. 575, 604, 613, 679, 683, 695, 726, 830, 887, 894 ; 2, p. 153. Cf. Paulsen, pp. 135-8.

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That is, they asked a verdict from a jury unfit to pronounce in the matter. It was the negation of the authority of the specialist, and the soul of the scholar shrank from it. If Lutheranism condemned humanity, then Lutheranism was no religion for him. "Perish the graces of the Latin language, perish the marvels of learning, which obscure the glory of Christ," so wrote in 1524 the Strassburg reformers, "the word of Christ saves us, the word of others destroys us."¹ Twice, therefore, Erasmus asserts his deliberate conviction that "where Lutheranism reigns, there letters die."² "Almost all studies," he sorrowfully points out, "are as ruined as belles-lettres."³

Toleration was an essential with Erasmus: it was opportunism with Luther. Erasmus defended toleration as a Christian philosophy, Luther as a revolutionary code. Princes Erasmus turned from the use of force. Toleration only stopped when sedition began: it was the one limit he imposed on liberty of conscience. To him reform apart from the Church, or from her traditions, intellectual and doctrinal, was impossible: to Luther it proved possible. To Erasmus religion was a unity—the conception of the oneness of the Church dominated his thought: to Luther religion was one of individualism. To Erasmus the value the Church placed on the Sacraments was beyond criticism: such a view as consubstantiation was foreign to his whole mode of thought. With many of the ideas of Luther he thoroughly sympathized, yet by the strange irony of history he spent the larger part of his life in opposing them. If he were what Bayle calls him, the St. John the Baptist of Luther, it was a pity that temperamentally they were not more akin. There was kinship between them, for both desired the change of heart of the individual. Erasmus, however, suspected Luther's attempt at a dogmatic reformation just as much as he suspected his ability to herald a religious renaissance.

¹ Capito, Hedio, Bucer . . . to Luther, Nov. 23, 1524 (Enders).

² Erasmus's letter to Pirkheimer, April 13, 1528, *Opp.*, III, p. 1139; x, p. 1618. Cf. Kampschulte, II, pp. 175, 179–80, 184, 201. To Pirkheimer: "Ubique regnat Lutheranismus, ibi litterarum est interitus. Et tamen hoc genus hominum maxime, litteris alitur. Duo tantum querunt, cenum et uxorem. Cætera præstat illis evangelium, i.e. potestatem vivendi ut volunt," III, col. 1139. Cf. *ibid.*, col. 777: "Lutheri factio . . . perdit omnia studia nostra"; *ibid.*, col. 915; *ibid.*, col. 1089: "Tantam ignaviam inexit hoc novum Evangelium."

³ Erasmus's letter to J. Henckel, March 7, 1526. Cf. *Opp.*, III, col. 1069: "Amant viaticum et uxorem, cetera pili non faciunt." Cf. *ibid.*, IV, 1139; also Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 161 ff., 200 ff., 256, 456; Böcking, *Hutten's Briefe*, I, 307–8; Böcking, *Hutteni, Opp.*, I, 151, 153–4, 165 ff., 169, 172, 254, 309–12, 316; Evers, 3, 328–54; Kolde, *Anal. Luth.*, 10; Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 157, 172, 242 ff., 449 ff., 481, 484.

Hegel observes that nothing great was ever done without passion. How could a prophet of impassioned soul understand the religious coldness of Erasmus? How could the heroic sympathize with the unheroic? To the one authority formed the paramount consideration, to the other liberty. It is neither popes nor kings, Erasmus dryly reminds the prophet, who are responsible for the misfortunes of Christianity, but those who abuse the authority of either the papal tiara or the imperial crown. Indeed, he declared that if the Church had adopted Arianism or Pelagianism, he would also have adopted it.¹ Some questions have been settled centuries ago, and it is chimerical to reopen them. Peace he unmistakably preferred to truth.

Erasmus failed to see that the days of the Holy Roman Empire were numbered, that on all sides new nations were coming into being. Unlike Luther, he stood apart from all the movements, whether social or political. Isolation had been as much his ideal as combination was that of his great rival. He never grasped the fact that the Reformation was fast becoming a national movement, and he shrank from its assuming this portentous transformation. He boasted that he understood as little of Italy as of Hindostan. Like Turgot, he was not sufficiently a man of the world, and did not allow enough for human nature. No national tongue did he speak with freedom, though he did recommend, in the preface of his Paraphrases to the New Testament, that the Bible should appear in German, in English, in French, and even in "Indian." Erasmus does not live: he writes. Though Luther writes he does more than Erasmus: he lives. To the end Erasmus entirely used Latin, while Luther largely used German. Luther was too national in his outlook to influence men of other lands. Erasmus was the exact type to move them, but his appeal was to the cultivated. Luther saw his native land as clearly as Zwingli saw his beloved Switzerland. Erasmus saw neither Germany, nor France, nor Spain, nor Italy, nor England, but the whole of Europe. The one is German, the other universal.

Standing aloof, like Fontenelle and Goethe, from the great causes that throbbed through the world of his day, Erasmus looked on not unmoved, but drew aside from the swift-flowing

¹ Erasmus's letter to Pirkheimer, Oct. 19, 1527 A: "Apud me tantum valeat (Ecclesia), ut cum Arianis et Pelagianis sentire possim, si probasset Ecclesia quod illi docuerunt." Hartfelder, *D. Erasmus von Rotterdam*, 134 ff. St. Austin says he should not be a believer in the Gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church moved him to believe. *Ep. Fund.*, 6, written in 397. Cf. *Conf.*, VI, xi, 19; *Enarr. in Ps. lxxxviii*, 14.

current. When a man stands on the summit of the Wetterhorn the meadows and houses below become unsubstantial mist. Erasmus saw from a height, but—this is the tragedy of it—he saw dimly. He only obtained a glimpse when he required a view. That view he might have caught in the rough and tumble of affairs, but not in the life of a recluse. Was not Gibbon right when he described Boëthius not as stooping, but rather rising, from his life of placid meditation to an active share in the business of the time? “If I had been born a private person,” Frederick the Great wrote to Voltaire in 1759, “I would give up everything for love of peace: but a man is bound to take on the spirit of his position.”¹ This spirit is precisely what Erasmus never assumed.

The antithesis between the man of thought and the man of action is an old one. It not seldom happens that the former, e.g. Sir Walter Scott, wishes he were the latter. Erasmus was, however, content to cultivate his garden. As he told Wimpheling, he was no gladiator in the arena,² no leader in the fight. Moral courage he did not lack. Did he not defend Luther at a time when the reformer had scarcely a friend? Unfortunately for men, courage depends not a little on physical qualities, and the health of Erasmus was never robust. A painful disease lowered the vitality which is so indispensable to a leader of men. He knew books: he did not know men as Luther knew them. Like Montesquieu, he studied men in books as Pope studied nature at Twickenham. Gibbon found the life of the captain of the Hampshire Grenadiers useful to the historian of the Roman Empire. Erasmus possessed no such practical experience. He loved truth, and he loved learning. His love, however, had not a trace of passion. Did his soul thrill as he caught a new aspect of a problem? Were there hot battles fought out in his breast—battles year long with difficulties solved in one form only to reappear in another? His study in Bâle was so quiet that it is difficult to credit it. He was not veering, he was not vacillating, but at the same time he was not an enthusiast. The fervours of piety, the zeal of Apostolic love, the fanaticism of sacrifice—these things find a place in the Gospels, but they formed no part of Erasmus’s life. Luther raised a storm in order to tear away the fading leaves from the tree, whereas Erasmus imitated nature in a tamer mood, pushing off the old leaf by the action of the bud which contains the leaf of next year. The time was out of joint, and Erasmus

¹ *Œuvres de Voltaire*, LXXVIII, p. 456.

² *Opp.*, III, Nov. 25, 1524, p. 827.

was only too pleased to have been born to straighten it—could it be done in a philosophical manner. His desire to obtain peace and unity for the Church—and his desire was most genuine—and at the same time procure a serene atmosphere during the process, constitutes a poignant element in the history of the time. He had many admirers: he had no devotees. *Credo in Newmannum* was once a watchword which inspired a movement. *Credo in Lutherum* was once a watchword which inspired a movement of another age. For the German reformer had a genius for action. He united two qualities, and these were religious enthusiasm and that power for action which imposed his views on those with whom he came into contact. His ardent and inflexible soul, inspired by enthusiastic mysticism, gave him an incomparable driving force, whose relentlessness crushed all opposition. Impassioned in his faith, he appeals to the passion of others. Is he not a master of the irony of insult? Did any one ever say *Credo in Erasmus*? All causes require a formula. What had the humanist to offer? He had a system, a scholarly system, which insisted on the necessity of always consulting the sources in the best available text. What appeal could it make to the peasant? Erasmus had the freest of minds, the broadest of outlooks. On the other hand Luther possessed the power of an “*idée fixe*.” Erasmus, moreover, had a horror of dogmatism, and dogmatic a leader must be. He had no convenient catchword, no cohesion in doctrine, or precision in formula like “faith without works” or “justification by faith.” He had no gifts for an appeal to *hoi polloi*. He was as incapable of moving the masses as the Scots humanist, Buchanan. Luther was as capable of moving them as Knox himself. Luther is as much the man of the brochure as Erasmus is the man of the book. Erasmus appealed to Reuchlin, Copernicus, Vives, Sir Thomas More and Rabelais. For, in spite of his limitations, he was one of the greatest of the sons of men, greater for succeeding generations than for his own. His many-sided mind diffused seminal ideas which brought forth fruit abundantly. Montaigne consulted his *Adages*, and who can measure the influence of Montaigne on the cause of freedom of thought? From the *Colloquies politiques* of sixteenth-century France learnt those lessons of toleration they put into practice. Even in his own day his work remained in closer contact with Luther than the reformer ever dreamt. The reformer’s friend was Melanchthon, and on Philip Melanchthon there rested the very spirit of Erasmus, making him the most broad-minded of the German reformers.

Like Oliver Cromwell, Erasmus's direct plans for reform, the reform of the Church, failed; his indirect, that is his system, succeeded. What keeps his memory green is the permanent stimulus he gave to life and thought.

Erasmus and Rabelais were men of the Renaissance who were determined not to break with the Church. Rabelais, however, had an interest in natural science and in nature not possessed by Erasmus: his mind was as roving as his life. Both preserved a detached attitude to life, and both thrust martyrdom to the one side. Rabelais cares more for liberty and reason than Erasmus. He desires above all things the complete development of his personality: over the doors of Thelema he inscribes *Fais ce que voudras*. Free life, free faith, free thought—this is the Rabelaisian ideal. His liberty is ruled by reason, controlled by knowledge and evangelizing precepts. He takes no pains to reconcile his thought with Christianity: nevertheless he believes that they harmonize. The belief is vague. There is a world between the *Grand Peut-être* of Rabelais, the *Que sais-je?* of Montaigne and the certainty which marked the utterance of Luther.

The year 1520 was important for other publications beside Luther's. That year Gian Francesco Pico published his *Examen vanitatis doctrinæ gentium et veritatis christianæ disciplinæ distinctum in libros sex*. Like Erasmus's *Novum Instrumentum*, it was dedicated to Leo X. The spirit of the two writers differed by worlds, though the Italian writer, perhaps unconsciously, was akin in his attitude to Luther's. He attacked the intellectualism of the Renaissance. Six years earlier Cardinal Adrian Castellesi in his *De vera philosophia* had advocated the dualistic conception of life, opposing reason and faith. He believed in order that he might comprehend, holding that reason cannot prove spiritual matters. Science is a useless acquisition: the Bible teaches us everything. Four years earlier still, Pomponazzi had attacked the view that the soul was immortal. Gian Francesco Pico, elaborating the argument set down by Castellesi, anticipates that of Montaigne. The Renaissance finds a solution for its problems in antiquity. Is there, however, a solution? Plato refutes his predecessors: the Peripatetics refute him. The Stoics refute Aristotle: others refute the Stoics. Epicurus refutes them: the Sceptics in turn refute them all. Clearly classical writers cannot solve the question. They cannot, for example, tell us if the soul lives after death. What is truth? For Protagoras man is the measure of things: there is no universal truth. For Plato truth is in mind which

is the principle of all knowledge, in the conformity of changing and perishable realities to the eternal types which constitute our reason. For Aristotle, according to Pico, truth lies in the value of the senses which furnish the intellect with material to be explored. For Carneades truth is not in reason, not in the senses, not in external representations. Man is the dupe, the toy of phenomena, catching glimpses of the truth. Let us admire, Pico asks us, the temple of human wisdom. It is surely well guarded. Pyrrhonism will not open its gates. Is Pyrrhonism true? If it were, it would in its turn be a dogmatism, and, after having shaken everything, it falls a victim to its own arms, reason. Knowledge has closed her doors: reason is bankrupt. Only in religion can man find truth and happiness. Like Luther, he offers up intelligence as a sacrifice on the altar of faith. The reformer was comparatively ignorant, but he thought much and felt more. Like Hobbes, if he had read as much as other people, he would have known as little as they. After all, Pascal, Descartes and Rousseau were not well-read men, but who exerted a greater influence on mankind than they?

CHAPTER IV

THE EXCOMMUNICATION AND AFTER

THE problem of truth, absolute or relative, was not one that vexed the soul of Leo X. Freedom of opinion he favoured, provided the revenues of the Papacy or its government did not suffer. He occupied a great position, but he did not fill it. Paolo Sarpi knew how exquisitely the Pope enjoyed art, and he looked on Leo as "absolutely complete, if with these sympathies he had joined some knowledge in the things that concern religion, and some more propension unto piety, of both of which he seemed careless."¹ Therefore he underestimated the gravity of the situation in Germany. In his vacillating fashion he "met the crisis with two compasses."² Frederick the Wise warned him: the warning was unheeded. Bankrupt he left the papacy at his death in 1522: bankrupt was his policy two years before this event. Instead of the Medici Pope, the Church required another Hildebrand. The crisis in the eleventh century had been as grave as that of the sixteenth. Catholicism then saved itself, and in turn saved Europe.

The solution of authority was the one that Leo X offered. On June 15, 1520, he promulgated the Bull *Exsurge Domine*,³ condemning forty-one propositions of Luther's teaching, and threatening the person of their author with excommunication if he did not repent and recant within sixty days after the publication of the Bull in Germany.⁴ The delay in the trial

¹ *History of the Council of Trent*, bk. I.

² Muratori, *Annali d'Italia* (ed. 2), XIV, 131. Cf. Ulmann, *Studien zur Geschichte des Papstes Leo X*, II, 91, 94, 97, 185, 461; Verdi, *Gli ultimi anni di Lorenzo de' Medici*, 103; Cian, *Musa Medicea*, 426 n. On Leo's dilatoriness cf. Paris de Grassis in Hoffmann, 428; Gnoli, *Le cacce di Leone X*, 15.

³ Bull, *Contra errores M. Lutheri*, Romæ, 1520. Printed also in Bullar, Rom., ed. Taurin, 5, p. 748, and in Raynaldus, *Annales*, a. 1520, n. 51; and with a satirical commentary by Luther in *Opp. lat. var.*, 4, p. 264 ff.

⁴ Kalkoff, *Zu Luther's römischem Prozess*; K. Müller in *Zeitsch. für Kirchengesch.*, 24, 1903, p. 46 ff.; A. Schulte, *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, 6, 1903, p. 32 ff.; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 7, pp. 361 ff.; Wiedemann, *Eck*, 150; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 270;

had been due to political causes, the unwillingness of the Pope to break with the Elector of Saxony, the approaching Imperial election and the procrastinations of the German bishops. The first proposal of the Commission had been to condemn all the propositions, as had been done in the case of the Propositions of Wyclif and Hus at the Council of Constance. In the end forty-one Propositions were condemned as "heretical or false, scandalous, offensive to pious ears, insulting, ensnaring and contrary to Catholic truth."¹ The matters condemned concerned the sacraments, indulgences, excommunication, the authority of the Pope, the verdict on Hus, human inability for good, faith, justification, grace, and Luther's statement that to burn heretics was against the will of the Spirit.²

The only penalty directly imposed on Luther was the prohibition to preach. The Bull declared that legally, as his case then stood, he might have been excommunicated without further question, particularly on account of his appeal to a General Council,³ to which the Constitutions of Pius II and Julius II had attached the penalties of heresy. The errors mentioned as occurring in his writings are designated in the body of the Bull, and with much circumlocution. Within sixty days he was to make his submission in writing before ecclesiastical witnesses, or to come to Rome under the safe conduct guaranteed by the Bull. On June 1, 1501, Alexander VI had issued the first papal edict ordering the burning of heretical books.⁴ In virtue of it Luther was also to commit his books to the flames.⁵ In default of complying with this censorship, by the papal declaration he would *ipso facto* incur the penalties of open heresy as a notorious heretic, that is, he would be cut off from the communion of the faithful. Every secular authority, including the Emperor, was bound in accordance with the law to enforce these penalties. A similar sentence was pronounced against all Luther's adherents, aiders or abettors. The Bull begins with the words of the Bible, "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily" (Psalm lxxiv. 22). "Take us the foxes, the little foxes,

Muther, *Aus dem Universitäts Gelehrten-Leben*, 429 f.; Tentzel, I, 459; 2, 178 ff.; T. Kolde, *Luther's Stellung*, 82 ff., and his *Friedrich der Weise*, 20 ff.; Köstlin, I, 307 ff.

¹ Schulte, *Quellen und Forschungen*, p. 49.

² Hergenröther, *Staat u. Kirche*, 556.

³ Cardinal Carvajal described Luther's appeal to a General Council as "the gravest of his offences" (Kalkoff, *Prozess*, 120 ff.).

⁴ Reusch, *Der Index Verbotener Bücher*, I, pp. 54-5.

⁵ Brieger, *Neue Mittheilungen über Luther in Worms*, 7; Förstemann, 61; Kolde, *Friedrich d. Weise*, 48; *Spengleriana*, 46 ff.

that spoil thy vines" (Song of Solomon, ii. 4).¹ "The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it" (Psalm lxxx. 13). "Lying teachers have arisen who set up schools of perdition and bring upon themselves speedy destruction; their tongue is a fire full of the poison of death." "They spit out the poison of serpents, and when they see themselves vanquished they raise calumnies." "We are determined to resist this pestilence and this eating canker, the noxious adder must no longer be permitted to harm the vineyard of the Lord."

The Bull then proceeds to assume a more moderate tone. "So far as concerns Martin himself, good God, what have we omitted, what have we not done, what fatherly charity have we neglected, that we might recall him from his errors? After we had summoned him, desiring to deal more mildly with him, through our legate and by letter, to renounce his errors, or to come without any hesitation or fear—for perfect love casteth out fear—and, after the example of our Saviour and the blessed Apostle Paul, talk not secretly but openly and face to face. To this end we offered him a safe conduct and money for the journey. If he had done this he would certainly, we believe, have seen his errors and repented. Nor would he have found so many evils in the Roman curia which, relying upon the empty rumours of its enemies, he abuses much more than is seemly. We should also have taught him more clearly than light that the holy Roman pontiffs, though he abuses them beyond all modesty, have never erred in their canons or constitutions."²

Of course, after the promulgation of this Bull, Charles V refused to countenance him.³ His hope was therefore placed in the protection of the Elector, for the execution of the Bull by the secular power now meant his death.⁴ He issued two versions of his pamphlet, *Against the Bull of the End-Christ*:⁵ the German version is milder than the Latin, which was ready at the close of October 1520. Unlike the publication of the August of this year there is no strong appeal to the German princes or Charles V. The call is emphatically one to the

¹ The fox in the Middle Ages was the usual symbol of heresy.

² Raynaldus, *Annales Eccl. ad annum* 1520, No. 51.

³ Lang, *Korrespondenz Karl V.*, I, 57; Brieger, 151 f.; Elze, 9; Förstemann, 75; Laemmer, *Monumenta vaticana*, 7 ff.

⁴ Förstemann, *Neues Urkundenbuch*, I, 32; Kalkoff, *Forschungen*, p. 543 ff.; Hess, II, 30–6.

⁵ Riederer, I, 319 ff., 348 ff., 441; 2, 54 ff., 179 ff., 186; *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 576 ff.; Erl. ed., 24, p. 17 ff.

German people. "Would it be surprising if the princes, the nobility and the laity were to knock the Pope, the bishops, the priests and the monks on the head and drive them out of the land?" For the action of Rome is heretical. The Pope, the bishops, the priests and the monks were bringing the laity about their ears by this "blasphemous, insulting Bull."¹ In the German version he maintains that the theological questions involved the point that "as a matter of fact the whole Christian Church cannot err," that is, "all Christians throughout the world." Nevertheless, the Pope is guilty of the most devilish presumption in setting up his own opinion as though it were as good as that of the whole Church.

Johann Eck, one of the ablest divines of the time, had taken part in the condemnation of Luther, and he was appointed one of the two commissioners to publish the Bull in Germany. He had entered the University of Heidelberg in 1493 at the age of thirteen,² and in 1495 he graduated as a bachelor of arts at the University of Tübingen when he at once began to give lectures. His studies he continued, and he proved a mighty opponent of Luther. Like the reformer, he was a peasant's son and a mystic. His powerful advocacy of orthodoxy earned for him the title Cardinal Pole bestowed upon him, the Catholic Achilles. His defect was his lack of intellectual sympathy: his zeal was as great as his knowledge, though it would have augured better for the cause he had at heart had his zeal been curbed. He was as free in his use of strong language as Luther himself. For three years the two men had been fierce antagonists, and this appointment made the document appear as if it had been merely partisan, extorted from the Pope by the principal opponent of the doomed man. To lend even more colour to this supposition, Eck was allowed to insert in the Bull the names of a limited number of Luther's adherents, an opportunity he employed in order to revenge himself upon some of his own foes, among them the humanist Wilibald Pirkheimer, author of the scornful and stinging satire, *Der*

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 621; Erl. ed., 24², p. 46.

² Johann Reuchlin and Gailer of Kaisersberg were undergraduates when only fifteen, and Regiomontanus when scarcely twelve. On Eck cf. Wiedemann, *Johann Eck*, 140, 376-9; Löscher, 3, 935-41; Hagen, 2, 63-73; *Werke*, Walch, 15, 1513 ff. On Eck's dislike of Luther cf. Löscher, 2, 64-104. On Eck and the Bull cf. Clemen, *Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte aus Büchern u. Handschriften der Zwickauer Ratsschulbibl.*, III, 43; Kropatscheck, 37; Riederer, *Beytrag zu den Reformationsurkunden*, etc., 69; Köstlin-Kawerau, *Martin Luther*, 1, 366; Ranke, *Reformationsgeschichte*, 1, 300; Seckendorf, 116; Tentzel-Cyprian, 1, 462 f.; 464 f.

abgehobelte Eck ("The Corner or Eck planed away")¹; Lazarus Spengler; Carlstadt and Johann Wildenauer (Sylvius) of Eger.

The reception of the Bull in Germany was far from cordial. Coming "bearded and moneyed," as Luther put it, Eck found himself an object of suspicion. Ulrich von Hutten judged that its publication would injure the Church more than her enemy. Eck posted it officially at Meissen,² Merseburg and Brandenburg near the end of September 1520. He endeavoured to force it on the universities of Germany, many of whom declined to receive it on technical grounds. At Wittenberg, for example, the faculty would have nothing to do with it,³ and at Erfurt the students seized all the printed copies of it and threw them into the River Gera.⁴ On the other hand, many copies of Luther's books were burned at Cologne, Mayence⁵ and other towns. Some of the followers of the prophet, Pirkheimer, Spengler and others of the Nürnberg group, were influenced by these demonstrations, and sought the good offices of Eck on their behalf. Such conduct made Aleander believe more than ever that the Lutheran movement was essentially base and material.

In September, as nuncio, Aleander sought an audience with Charles V at Antwerp.⁶ He was received, and obtained from the young Emperor the first decree against Luther and his disciples in the Netherlands. The Lateran Council, 1515, had directed proceedings against all printed wicked and heretical books. In October Charles issued an edict ordering the burning of Luther's books within his hereditary dominions.⁷ On October 8 the zealous and abusive Aleander published the Bull at Louvain and solemnly burnt the condemned books,⁸ seizing

¹ Cf. *Op. varii argu.*, 4, 19, 58, 82 ff.; Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), 1, 389, 395, 404, 422, 426, 465; 6, 602-3; Pallavicini, *Hist. conc. Trid.*, I.I.C. 24; Kampschulte, *Univ. Erfurt*, 2, 37 f.; Riederer, *Nachrichten zur Kirchen- und Gelehrten-geschichte*, 2, 189.

² Seidemann, *Reformationszeit*, 38.

³ Wiedemann, *Johann Eck*, p. 156 ff.; Kampschulte, *Univ. Erfurt*, II, p. 37 ff., 117; Krause, *Hessus*, 1, 330 ff.; *Corp. Reform.*, 1, 489 ff., 504; Strobel, *Miscell.*, V, 119 f.; Jäger, *Carlstadt*, 140-4, 253; Riederer, *Beytrag*, 33 ff.; Weller, *Altes*, II, 710.

⁴ Cf. Balan, *Mon. ref.*, II, 8; Kampschulte, 2, 37-40; G. Oergel, *Beiträge zur Gesch. des Erfurter Humanismus in Mitt. des Vereins für Gesch. u. Altertumskunde von Erfurt*, Hft. 15, 85 ff.; Muther, 429 f.

⁵ Erasmus protested when Aleander ordered a general destruction of Luther's writings at Mayence (Kalkoff, *Aleander*, 26; Balan, 55, 79-81, 100-2; Brieger, 52-4; Friedrich, 115-6).

⁶ Förstemann, 27; Ranke, 1, 328; Steitz, *Lutherherbergen*, 47.

⁷ *Reichstagsakten*, II, 451, 518, 529-33; Kalkoff, 141 ff.; Förstemann, 1, 55-6; Steitz, 53-5.

⁸ On Aleander's belief in burning books cf. Balan, 69-70; Kalkoff, *Aleander*, 30-1; Dittrich, *Histor. Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft*, III, 677.

the occasion to attack Erasmus in what was one of his many homes for supporting the heretic. On October 17 Aleander ordered the burning of more books at Liège, for he considered the public burning of heretical books as the best means of checking the propagation of false doctrine.¹ In the meantime Luther was not inactive. On November 17, 1520, he made another appeal to a free Christian Council. His appeal was published at the same time as his Latin work, *Against the Bull of the End-Christ*. The Pope he denounced as an unrighteous judge, a heretic and apostate, an enemy of the Holy Scriptures, and a slanderer of Church and Council. He also called again upon emperors, princes, and all civil officials to support his appeal and oppose what he styled the unchristian conduct of the Pope. His feelings as a patriot were as much wounded as his judgments as a theologian. In 1518 he implored the aid of the Elector of Saxony on national grounds, and he thus enlisted the sympathy of the Court of Saxony. In 1519 he struck again the same note, not unsuccessfully. In 1520 it is clear that he seeks support in national feeling for national religion.²

At the great crises of her history Germany has never lacked able men: she has sorely lacked statesmen. In 1520 neither Luther nor Melanchthon was fitted to control the forces they had called into existence. Luther was a leader of opposition *against* Rome: he was not a statesman *for* a new order. To whom was he to turn? The thoughtful Jakob Wimpheling was old and out of sympathy with the new school of reform. There were scholars like Mutianus and such members of his circle as Georg Spalatin, Eoban of Hesse and Crotus Rubianus. There were humanists like Johann Reuchlin and Ulrich von Hutten; there were antiquarians like Conrad Peutinger; there were satirists like Sebastian Brandt and Thomas Murner; there were artists like Albrecht Dürer; there were citizens like Wilibald Pirckheimer; there were revolutionaries like Andreas Bodenstein von Carlstadt; and there were rulers like Frederick the Wise. Was there a statesman in their ranks? The annals of the Diet attest the fact that some of its members possessed as little experience as the makers of the French Revolution. The truth is the Reformation drifted without statesmanlike guidance from its leading spirit. Feeling within Luther was red-hot, and words gushed forth like an impetuous

¹ Cf. the report of Aleander to Leo X in *Quellen und Forschungen*, I, p. 151 ff., and *Reichstagsakten*, II, p. 454 ff., and 518 ff.

² Cf. Sigismondo de Conti, 2, 291; cf. also Strauss, 2, 35; Hagen, 2, 55 ff.; Bezold, 289.

torrent, but the brain did not work as if packed in ice. As Erasmus indicated, the judgment of the reformer was not restrained. Gustavus Adolphus, Richelieu, and Bismarck perceived the limits within which their tasks were to be completed. It is a rare sense, one indeed of the rarest, and it was denied to Luther. It is possible that Philip of Hesse might in 1520 have grasped this sense, had he been old enough, but then he was only fifteen years of age.

The experience of 1520 is an ever-new experience with Germany. In 1848 there were scholars like Bopp, Böckh, Curtius, and the brothers Grimm; there were satirists like Heine; there were scientists like Fechner, Gauss, Humboldt, Helmholtz, Kirchhoff, Liebig, Johann Müller, Ohm and Virchow; there were musicians like Liszt, Meyerbeer, Schumann, Spohr, and Wagner; there were philosophers like Schelling and Schopenhauer; there were jurisconsults like Eichhorn and Savigny; there were political economists like Hildebrand, Marx and Roscher; there were theologians like Baur, Döllinger, Ritschl, Rothe and Strauss; and there were historians like Ranke and his three pupils, Giesebrecht, Sybel, and Waitz, and there were Droysen and Mommsen. They were all devoid of that practical experience, that insight which the times demanded. It is certain that Bismarck in 1848 possessed the insight, but did even he then possess the necessary experience? Ability there has been in the sixteenth as in the nineteenth century, but this ability has had no opportunity of exercising its political powers.

The philistine of genius, as Matthew Arnold calls him, resolved to exercise his powers to the utmost. From talk to action was an easy matter, for one who felt himself to be inspired by God. Early on the morning of December 10 Melanchthon posted on the door of the city church the notice to the undergraduates of Wittenberg which he had drawn up. "Whoever is devoted to gospel truth," it runs, "let him be on hand at nine o'clock by the Church of the Holy Cross, outside the walls, where according to ancient and apostolic custom the impious books of papal law and scholastic theology will be given to the flames. For the audacity of the enemies of the gospel has gone so far as to burn the devout and evangelical book of Luther. Come, reverent and studious youth, to this pious and religious spectacle, for perhaps now is the time when Antichrist shall be revealed." Philip the Fair had burnt the Bull of Boniface VIII, *Ausculat fili*, on January 26, 1302, and now Luther was about to defy the Pope in like manner. As in

France, the universities, with the exception of Wittenberg and Erfurt, ranged themselves against the new teaching. These, however, were vital exceptions, for they gave the fresh doctrine its great opportunity. At the time appointed a large crowd gathered just outside the Elster gate of the town. The students built a fire, and Luther threw into it the Canon Law along with the Bull of Excommunication.¹ *Delenda est Carthago*. The following were cast into the flames—the *Decretum* of Gratian, the *Decretals*² with the *Liber Sextus*, the *Clementines* and the *Extravagants*, the *Summa Angelica* of Angelus de Clavasio, the work then most in use on the sacrament of Penance, books of Eck, particularly that entitled *Chrysoprasus*, some of Emser, and others offered by the zeal of private individuals. According to John Agricola, the works of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus would also have been consigned to the flames, but no one was found willing to deprive himself of them for that purpose. In the act of burning the Bull, Luther pronounced these words, "Because thou hast brought down the truth of the Lord, He also brings thee down unto this fire to-day."³ In the reformer's view the claims of the Church to coercive jurisdiction disappeared in the smoke of the flames.

It was a memorable day in the Old World, and no less memorable in the New, for the very day Luther burnt the Bull, Fernando Cortez entered Mexico. In his treatise *Warumb des Bapsts und seyner Jungern Bucher von D. Martin Luther vorbrant seyn*, the reformer says, "From all time it has been the custom to burn impious books (Acts xix. 19), and as Doctor in the Holy Scripture he was bound to suppress bad books; if others from ignorance or human respect neglected to do this, it did not free him from the responsibility. His writings had been burnt at Cologne and Louvain, which, among the ignorant, had raised suspicion against him; therefore, for the establishment of the truth, he had good reason to burn the books of his adversaries, being, as he hoped, prompted thereto by the Holy Ghost." He issued in both Latin and German his pamphlet, *Why the Books of the Roman Pontiff and of his Disciples have been burnt by Dr. Martin Luther*. In it he enumerates thirty propositions taken from the books of Canon Law and the

¹ Luther's letter to Spalatin, Dec. 10, 1520, *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 118; M. Perlbach and J. Luther, *Ein neuer Bericht über Luther's Verbrennung der Bannbulle*; Kawerau, *Theo. Studien*, 1908, p. 587; Kolde, 1, 290; Köstlin, 1, 407; Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Reformation*, 1, 396; Hefele-Hergenröther, 9, 148; Riffel, 1, 249-52.

² Evers, 158; Lanz, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 262; Luther's *Sämmtl. Werke*, 24, 96, 134-40.

³ Cf. Joshua, vii. 25.

Papal Decretals, which he considers ought to be destroyed. In his prologue he gives reasons for his action. The example of St. Paul at Ephesus proves that the burning of books is an old custom. He is a baptized Christian, a sworn Doctor of Holy Scripture, whose business it was to drive away all false and misleading doctrine. The Pope and his officials refused to listen to either his instructions or his warnings, and therefore he was bound to take action. He is not quite sure that the authors of the Bull of 1520 are really obeying the Papal commands, for did not Leo X approve of the books he had committed to the flames? Lastly, the burning of his own books had raised doubts and suspicions of his teaching among the untaught people, and by an instinct, as he hoped of the Spirit, he burnt the books in order to preserve Christian truth.¹ In February 1521, he issued a short pamphlet entitled *An Instruction to Penitents with regard to the Forbidden Books*, in which he charged those who were threatened with the refusal of absolution for having his works in their possession to stand out firmly against their confessors.²

In Bâle and Zürich, in Rome and Madrid, in Paris and Strassburg, his actions are the subject of discussion.³ The spirit of the reformer may well have quailed at the magnitude of the task before him. Yet to few leaders has success come so quickly. He was condemned in 1520, and within fifteen years in his own land, in Switzerland and Alsace, countries in which he was warmly interested, in England, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, the State had definitely adopted the doctrines of the revolutionary. It is an amazing diffusion, aided powerfully by the changes consequent upon the grand astronomical and geographical discoveries of the age, the ferment caused in the minds of the people by the unprecedented effects of the new silver from Peru, affecting wages and prices, changing the employment of land from tillage to pasturage, and thereby making the peasant in the remotest districts conscious of the storm of revolution sweeping through Europe.

It was only five years since the Papacy gained control of the printing-press in the 10th session of the Court of the Lateran, 1515.⁴ Then the Pope forbade, under pain of excommunication

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 5, p. 154 ff., p. 257 ff.; *Briefe*, I, p. 542 (De Wette).

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 24, p. 204; *Briefe*, I, p. 560 (De Wette).

³ Enders, No. 282, Botzheim's letter to Luther, March 3, 1520; No. 284, Hermann Humph's letter to Luther, March 14; Crotus Rubianus's letter to Luther, April 28.

⁴ Bull, v, 625 ff.; Fessler, *Kirchl. Bücherverbot*, 51 ff.; *ibid.*, *Schriften*, 149 ff.; Hausmann, *Päpstl. Reservatfälle*, 113; Lea, 3, 614; Reusch, I, 55 ff.

and of heavy fines, the printing of any book without the approval of the bishop and the inquisitor, and in Rome of the Cardinal Vicar and the Master of the Palace. Every book printed contrary to these regulations was to be burnt.

On the receipt of the Bull of June 15, 1520, the Sorbonne gave a more careful examination to the writings of Luther than Louvain, Cologne, or Leo X himself. On April 15, 1521, it gave its decision on 104 propositions on faith, the sacraments, the Bible, the Church extracted from the books or sermons of the reformer, especially from the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. It condemned the dogmatic and theological errors, the heresies, and the rashnesses, the sacrilegious negations on free will, the works, the sacraments, the criticisms on the hierarchy and the scandalous criticisms of the authenticity of the Dionysian tracts and Aristotelianism.¹ The Sorbonne sent letters to the Emperor, the Duke of Saxony and Francis, exhorting princes to forbid in their domains such pernicious doctrines, and consider means "to extirpate" them in France. The means were obvious. Close the frontier to the entrance of books. When they are smuggled in, buy them and burn them.² On May 18, 1521, by royal command the Parlement of Paris assumed powers preventing the appearance of any book without the imprimatur of the university.³ On June 13 came the important decree forbidding the printing or the sale of books dealing with religious questions till authorized by the faculty of theology. Hitherto it had declared that it was not its custom to condemn men without hearing them: henceforth it was sufficient to read their writings.⁴ In every diocese bishops, e.g. Briçonnet of Meaux, and Guillaume Petit of Troyes, hastened to obey. Erasmus pointed out to Beda that when men commenced by burning books they ended by burning persons.⁵ Jean Valliers of Falaise was burnt in 1523. Men, like the humanist theologian, Clichtowe, began to wonder if

¹ The text is in Du Plessis d'Argentré, II, p. ii. The *Determinatio* (i.e. of the theological faculty of Paris) "super doctrina Lutheri hac tenus revisa" is in Du Plessis d'Argentré, I, 2, 365-75. Cf. Hefele-Hergenröther, 9, 159 ff.

² Balan, pp. 201, 282; Brieger, pp. 237, 257.

³ Delisle, *Un registre des procès-verbaux*, etc., 1899; Hefele-Hergenröther, IX, 159 ff.; Du Plessis d'Argentré, I, 2, 365-75.

⁴ *Lib. Conclus.*, f. 35; f. 72.

⁵ Erasmus's letter to Beda, June 15, 1525, *Epist.*, p. 869. On the attitude of Erasmus to the Bull cf. Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 527; *Op. varii argu.*, 5, 238 ff., 248-9; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 271; Spalatin, *Annales* (Cyprian), II ff., 15, 28 ff.; Giesler, 3, I, 83; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, I, 398-9; Von der Hardt, I, 169.

force was really efficacious.¹ In spite of this wonder, the University of Oxford condemned Luther's writings.²

An inevitable result of the condemnation of Luther was that the reaction against Erasmus was accentuated. Here was the result of the scholarship of Erasmus, proving that his classical studies inflicted as much harm on religion as the Hebrew learning of Reuchlin. If Luther has gone astray, so too must his masters. Who taught him his theology of faith, his denial of works, his contempt of monks, and his denial of the worship of saints? The spirit of novelty is the outcome of the new learning. Erasmus is the danger. So long as his writings are tolerated, so long there will be heresy.³ In 1521 a monk preaching before the King of France names Reuchlin, Erasmus and Lefèvre as precursors of Antichrist.⁴ The syndic of the Sorbonne, the intelligent and active Noel Beda, is organizing an orthodox party. In Spain Zuniga makes a list of the heresies of Erasmus, joining with his those of Lefèvre.⁵ In England Edward Lee writes commentaries attacking the *Novum Instrumentum*.⁶ It is in vain that the scholar pleads that he is earnestly defending the Church. It is in vain that he claims in his favour the briefs of Leo X, the appeals of Adrian VI, the gifts of Clement VII, who all praise his writings, the intervention of the Sacred College against Zuniga, the encouragement of bishops, and the marks of favour of princes. The reaction goes so far that if a writer questions scholastic arguments the Church is threatened. In Beda Erasmus finds 3000 monks! The scholar himself was shaken in his attitude. Like Moses, he prepared the spirit of reform: like Moses, when he saw that spirit translated into action, he shrank from the sight. The horror of schism inspires respect for the old ways. Reforms are advisable in days of peace: they are decidedly inadvisable in days of revolution. The motto then must be *Obsta principiis*. The movement at Meaux, headed by the French, Erasmus, and Lefèvre, passed away, and with it passed away all hope of a Reformation on the German scale. Henceforth there was no hope for the success of a French translation of the Bible or the Breviary. Francis will still patronize

¹ Anti-Lutherus. Preface to C. Guiliant, *Président du Parlement*, June 3,

1524.

² Du Plessis d'Argentré, I, 2, 380 ff.

³ Beda, *Annot.*, preface.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to the Bishop of Tournai, June 17, 1521, *Epist.*, p. 646.

⁵ *Annotationes Jacobi Lopidi Stunicae contra Jacobum Fabrum Stapulensem*, Alcalá, 1519, Paris, 1522; *ibid.*, *Annotationes . . . contra Erasmus Roterodamum*, Alcalá, 1520, Paris, 1522.

⁶ *Annotationes in novum Testamentum Erasmi*, April 1520.

scholarship—that is all. The educational works of Melanchthon are published in France, for he was more humanist than reformer, though he is the greatest theologian of Lutheranism. In 1522 appears his *Résumé of Dialectics*, and the following year his *Institutiones rhetoricæ*, which was reprinted in 1528, 1531, and 1533. From 1526 to 1533 his Latin grammar passed through five editions. The Sorbonne will proscribe the works of Erasmus, and the people will neglect them. Nevertheless, they influence public opinion. Of course France, less free than Spain, cannot read the *Paraphrases* in her own tongue. Still in 1526 comes Erasmus's *Treatise on the Education of Children*: in 1527 Colines edits the *Colloquies*, and in 1529 appear in Paris and Lyons the *Enchiridion* and the *Paraclesis*.¹ In spite of the Sorbonne, the Parlement, more liberal than the faculty of theology, authorizes the appearance of these works. There were six editions of Erasmus's *De ratione studii* in German from 1519 to 1526. His *De duplici copia verborum* is printed everywhere, especially in Paris in 1528, 1534, 1535 and 1536, and at Lyons in 1535. Indeed in 1527 Erasmus felt so sure of a friendly feeling among the members of the Sorbonne that he appeals to Parlement for protection. In 1533 his *Explanatio symboli . . . et decalogi* is published in Paris. There were at least thirty editions of the *Colloquies* before his death.²

In France Erasmus's books were read by the thoughtful with intense delight; in Germany the common people heard him gladly. Among the propositions condemned by the Bull of 1520 was Luther's thesis directed against free will in the Disputation at Heidelberg. It was given in his own words, viz. that free will is an empty name. The same year the Sorbonne denounced this proposition as "false, contrary to the sacred doctors and to all morality, in agreement with the Manichean error, heretical, scandalous, impious"; and the Academies of Louvain and Cologne gave similar verdicts. In defence of the condemned propositions he wrote in 1520 the *Assertio Omnium Articulorum*, which was published the following year. Strong as his previous statements on the lack of free will had been, he declares that he had expressed himself far too feebly when speaking of the semblance of freedom: therein he did himself—and the cause he had at heart—injustice, for he was never able to express himself with moderation. The term *liberum arbitrium* was a device of the devil. Hence he argues that free will was a lie, an invention. "No one had

¹ Panzer, Nos. 1517, 1786, 1849.

² Imbart de la Tour, *Les Origines de la Réforme*, 3, 360-1.

the power to think anything evil or good, but everything takes place agreeably with stern necessity, as Wyclif rightly taught, though his proposition was condemned by the Council of Constance.”¹

God has our life in his hands, and how much more all our actions, even the most insignificant. God, as the highest being, cannot permit himself to be influenced by man’s changeableness in the way that free will would involve. On the contrary, he must by virtue of his nature determine everything himself, even to the smallest matter. Nor does he do so merely by his general influence which, according to the chatter-boxes, alone assists our free will ; free will must perish in order to make room for a strict and compelling influence. “All is of necessity, for we—every man and every creature—live and act not as we will, but as God wills. In God’s presence the will ceases to exist.”²

He asserts that the denial of free will is nothing less than the fundamental article of his teaching.³ The text which he thought most in favour of his view was Ephesians ii. 3, where St. Paul lays down that “we were by nature children of wrath, even as the others.” The saying regarding the clay and the potter he uses to maintain that we are entirely passive in the hands of God.⁴ Isaiah says in xlv. 9, “Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou ? or thy work, He hath no hands ? ” He is able to quote, though not altogether fairly, a remark of St. Austin. In his controversy with the Pelagians the African father was driven to hold the proposition that without grace, and left to itself, free will cannot as a rule avoid sin.⁵ He had on other occasions held the proposition that the will, nevertheless, of its own strength is able to do what is naturally good. In his desire, however, to conquer the Pelagians he goes so far as to state that “free will can do nothing but sin when the path of truth is hidden.” Naturally Luther employs this dictum in order to buttress his own position.

St. Austin was guilty of exaggeration in one direction : Luther was guilty of exaggeration in another. His remarks on the futility of good works do not always commend themselves to the judgment, but the practice of the Church in his days

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 146 ; Erl. ed., 5, p. 250.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 143 ff. ; Erl. ed., 5, p. 227 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 148 ; Erl. ed., 5, p. 234.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 1, p. 106.

⁵ *De spiritu et litt.*, c. 3, No. 5.

warrants some of his outbursts. "The Popish Church knows only how to teach and," he bitterly adds, "to sell good works. Its worldly pomp does not agree with our theology of the cross, which condemns all that the Pope approves, and produces martyrs."¹

Practice obliged him to look with scant favour on the good works he witnessed around him, though no doubt the trend of his own thought urged him to take a similar view. The mysticism of the quietist exercised great fascination upon him, and made him feel, theoretically at least, that a life of contemplation was more ideal than a life of action. The late mediæval mysticism indulged in language which implied the annihilation of the will by means of the Divine, for was not grace omnipotent? He found it difficult to escape from the rule of life which as a friar he had observed. His attitude towards faith was combined in him with other motives, leading him to feel that God was in his heaven and therefore all was right with the world. With St. Paul he could ask the question, "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"² To Luther, as to the Jew, the first idea in his theology was the greatness of God. The innumerable and inexplicable things of life are simply the whirling wheel on which the clay is changed and shaped till the potter's design is finally accomplished. Eastern nations realize the sovereignty of God: Western nations do not. In this respect Luther was markedly eastern in his mental affinities. To him the independence and the restlessness of the westerner were utterly abhorrent. God is great, and it is not in our power to resist. God knows all, and, in spite of the saying of Alfonso of Castile, it is not in our capacity to criticize. We are His creatures, and are at His disposal. Has He sent good? Blessed be God. Has He sent evil? Blessed be God. We are the clay and He is the Potter.³

It is a law of mechanics that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Intellectually, Luther affords a conspicuous example of the working of this law. The mediæval Church had pressed the importance of works and the free will that enabled them to be performed. Luther now presses the importance of faith and the needlessness of works. The

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 148; Erl. ed., 5, p. 234. On Luther's attitude to works cf. Denifle, 1¹, 599, 605 ff.; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 465 ff., 552 ff.

² Romans ix. 9-10.

³ Cf. Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra*.

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reaction at last had come, and its depth was proportional to the exaltation of the doctrine which had gone before. The mightier the wave, the greater is the stretch of sand ultimately left exposed. The example of Francis of Assisi raises his followers to a pinnacle beyond the reach of mankind ; but the work of the satirist and the record of the annalist agree in their evidence that the friars of the sixteenth century were as much below the level of good men as their predecessors were above it. Through the mouth of Pericles, Thucydides praises the Athenians for the exact qualities which, in the eyes of Demosthenes, they utterly lack. The energy of the Athenians of one century was as much above the normal level as that of their descendants of the next century was below it. There are many swings of the pendulum backwards and forwards before the repose of the mean is reached.

From the storm that was gathering round his devoted head some protection was afforded by Erasmus, and some by Spalatin, the chaplain to Frederick, whom Aleander calls " the fox of Saxony." The latter was not only the trusted adviser of Frederick the Wise, but also of his two successors, John the Steadfast, and John Frederick the Magnanimous. He often counselled the prophet as to the course he ought to pursue, and this makes us regret all the more that all his letters have perished. There are letters from Luther to him, but there are none from him to Luther. It is obvious that though the prophet addressed his correspondence to his friend, yet it was meant more for the Elector's eye, and was designed for the purpose of winning over the Saxon sovereign to a policy of toleration for the new teaching. To Spalatin, accordingly, Luther made the following declaration to the Elector on March 5, 1519: " The Roman decrees must allow me full liberty with regard to the true Gospel ; of whatever else they rob me, I do not care. What more can I do, or can I be bound to anything further ? " ¹ " If they do not confute us on reasonable grounds and by written proofs," he writes, " but proceed against us by force and censures, then things will become twice as bad in Germany as in Bohemia." ² " Where can I turn for better instruction ? " he demands. " Let His Highness the Prince," he writes concerning his chair at the University, " put me out into the street so that I may either be better instructed or confuted." He, for his part, is ready to resign his public appointment, retire into private life, allow others to take his place, and let

¹ Luther's letter to Spalatin, *Briefwechsel*, 2, p. 446.

² Luther's letter to Spalatin, July 20, 1520, *Briefwechsel*, 2, p. 433.

all his belongings be burnt. But he also thinks it just that the Elector, being personally unable to instruct him, should refuse to act either as judge or executioner until a true ecclesiastical sentence be pronounced. The chief point is that "the question under discussion has not been solved, and my enemies have not touched it with so much as a single word. The Prince, under these circumstances, may well refuse to punish any one, even though he be a Turk or a Jew, for he is in ignorance whether he be guilty or not; his conscience bids him pause, and how then can the Romanists demand that he should step in and obey men rather than God?" Frederick was so impressed by this letter that he wrote to Rome to say that Luther was ready to be better instructed from Holy Scripture by learned judges. No one could rightly reproach him; he was far from extending protection to the writings and sermons of Dr. Martin Luther or "from tolerating any errors against the Holy Catholic faith."¹

The Elector's desire not to commit himself was not increased by the publication of such pamphlets as Hutten's *Vadiscus*, or the Roman Trinity and *Inspicientes* ("The Onlookers"): these dialogues appeared in April 1520. In *Vadiscus* all the author has to tell against Rome is cast in the form of a triad. Three things in Rome are without number—strumpets, priests, and scribes. Three things maintain the dignity of Rome—the authority of the Pope, the relics of the saints, and the sales of indulgences. Three things are banished from Rome—simplicity, moderation, and purity. Three things are laughed at in Rome—the example of the past, the pontificate of St. Peter, and the last day. Three things pilgrims bring back from Rome—unclean consciences, bad digestions, and empty purses. Three things preserve the power of Rome—the authority of the Pope, the bones of the saints, and the traffic in indulgences. Three things the Romans sell—Christ, livings, and women. Three things are loathed in Rome—a general council, a reformation of the clergy, and the fact that the Germans begin to open their eyes. Three things keep Germany from acquiring wisdom—the stupidity of the princes, the decay of scholarship, and the superstition of the people. Three things displease the Romans intensely—the unity of the Christian princes, the education of the people, and the discovery of their (i.e. Roman) frauds. Three things the Romans cannot secure enough of—money for the pallium, monthly and annual incomes from vacant benefices. Three things Rome chiefly fears—that princes should be agreed,

¹ July 10, 1520, *Opp. lat. var.*, 2, p. 351.

that the people's eyes should be opened, and that its own deceit should come to light. Three things only will reform Rome—that princes should be in earnest, the people impatient, and a Turkish army at the gates. Three things are excommunicated at Rome—indigence, the early Church, and the preaching of the truth. Three things are despised at Rome—poverty, the fear of God, and justice. And so the triads go on, exposing the moral corruption of the city and thereby endangering papal authority. In *The Onlookers* vices are severely satirized. At the end of the dialogue Cardinal Cajetan converses with celestial speakers, and, in virtue of powers he has received from the Pope, he claims to be able to excommunicate the Sun.¹

The Reformation was fortunate in finding its voice in Saxony. In Germany and in Switzerland the whole country was so divided into principalities and towns that the might of the Holy Roman Empire, even of Charles V, was unable to overcome it. A land divided in government prepared the way for the new religion. It had been the high office of the old Roman Empire to get ready the roads for Christianity by its single State with one capital, one ruler, one law. By an inversion of this process it was the high office of its heir, the Holy Roman Empire, to get ready the way for the new Evangel by its very disunion, for political particularism prepared the way for religious. In France, on the other hand, for half a century past, centralization had been steadily increasing, and the strength of the alliance between Church and State had been just as steadily increasing. The result was that the Reformation in France did not—could not in the circumstances of the country—make progress. The appearances presented by Gallicanism were deceptive. The Church, through the Sorbonne, and the State, through the Parlement, maintained the religious position with inflexible rigour. For three centuries the faculty of theology had proved a zealous guardian of orthodoxy. The clergy were submissive, and the bishops were controlled by the State. Did not the Concordat, made by Leo X and Duprat, confer fresh powers on the King in the disposition of dignities? Reform of the French Church never crossed the brain of Francis I, though for diplomatic reasons he might toy with the idea. The Parlement no less rigidly preserved order, for order is essential to unity. Just as Luther brought disunion to the

¹ *Op. Hutteni*, ed. Böcking, 4, pp. 145–269. Cf. Paulsen, 49 ff.; Strauss, *Ulrich v. Hutten*, 105 ff.; S. Szamatólski, *Ulrich v. Hutten deutsche Schriften*, 53 ff.; Strauss, *Hutten's Gespräche*, 114 ff., 259.

Empire and union to the Protestant princes thereof, so France by a reverse process kept its hardly won unity by one doctrine, one creed, wrought into the very fibre of the nation. A revolution in faith meant a revolution in government. On May 22, 1524, Clement VII pointed out to Francis that heresy was as much against the integrity of the Crown as against the integrity of faith.¹ Budé felt that to ruin the Church was at the same time to ruin the State.² The French Reformation, such as it is, has been as much founded by Luther as the German. In Germany, Switzerland, and England, the Reformation is national: in France it is nothing of the kind. It is significant that Calvin, one of the greatest of Frenchmen, laboured in Switzerland, not in his native country, making Geneva his headquarters. Others of his countrymen made Strassburg, a town in intimate relations with Germany, their headquarters. Both Strassburg and Geneva became strong centres of the new faith, and the towns and villages between them gathered adherents in every one of them. From the Rhine to the Rhone the progress was continuous, and it naturally gave the Reformation that Teutonic stamp which has always been so repugnant to the genius of France.

The three most important pamphlets, which, next to his translation of the Bible, Luther ever wrote were composed during the last half of the memorable year 1520. These are *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation on the Improvement of the Christian Estate*,³ *A Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and *On the Freedom of a Christian Man*. These little quarto pamphlets are now brown and worm-eaten, each with its engraved and allegorical title-page. Then they came fresh from that new invention, the printing-press, voicing plainly in town and country, in farm and workshop, the dimly felt religious aspirations, and the no less deeply felt political discontents. Unlike Erasmus, Luther wrote rapidly with little care for style and with no ambition for literary renown. The first pamphlet appeared about the middle of August, and by the 18th no less than four thousand copies were already circulated. The warning of Staupitz not to publish it arrived too late. The author's friends, the Knights, were loud in their

¹ A. V., Arm. XL, vol. viii, No. 218.

² *De transitu Hellenismi*, pp. 175, 180. On p. 181 he observes: "Dum . . . ab ovo exædificationem ecclesiæ dei repetunt . . . religionem christianismi ad chaos reduxerunt Academiæ."

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, pp. 381-469; Erl. ed., 31, pp. 277-360. *An den christlichen Adel deutschen Nation von des christlichen Standes Besserung* (ed. K. Benrath, Halle, 1884).

demand for its appearance. Luther gave a detailed description of the Roman exactions, setting forth, as Machiavelli had done, the argument that Germany, and indeed other countries, were being exploited on the pretext that contributions were required for the administration of the Church. As Savonarola assailed the political interests of the papacy, so Luther assailed the economic. The religious attacks of either would have been ignored: their practical attacks could not be. When Pomponazzi attacked the conception of the immortality of the soul, he did so purely as an academic argument. He was careful to point out that all he wrote he submitted to the judgment of the Apostolic See. As his belief did not affect the purse of the Pope, it was allowed freedom of expression.

At Rome everything was for sale: livings, dignities, cardinalates, the papacy itself, changing hands for money. When these are not sold, it is possible to sell pardon for sins. There is a regular scale. The fine for adultery is 150 ducats, for the murder of two daughters 800 ducats, and so on. "The Lord," remarked an official at the court of Innocent VIII, who had bought his tiara, "does not will the death of a sinner; he wills that he shall live and shall pay." Nicolas V, a Mæcenas if ever there was one, wore diamonds and pearls over the crown and thorns of the Redeemer. His sixteenth-century successor was a far different type. When Michael Angelo was finishing the statue of Julius II, he represented that pontiff with one of his hands raised either for blessing or cursing. The sculptor inquired what he was to put in the other hand. Was he to carve a book? "Place a sword there," answered Julius II, "I do not know letters." The popes of the first half of the sixteenth century, with the honourable exception of Adrian VI, have the sword in their hand on behalf of their Italian States and of the interests of their children. They are chiefs of principalities, not heads of the Church, requiring incessant supplies of money for the furtherance of their secular interests. Men spoke of the avarice of the Church, the sensuality of the Church, the ambition of the Church because these were the matters they either saw or heard. Leo X abdicated the government of souls in favour of letters and learned men, who pay in homage what others pay in money.

Erasmus wrote for princes and learned men, and he scarcely moved the people. They saw that simony was rampant in the Church, though humanistic disputes never crossed their horizon. They neither read nor wrote. They sowed their corn, they planted their vine, they manufactured their goods—and they

resented the exactions of the ecclesiastical tax-gatherer.¹ It was indeed as an orthodox member of the Church that Luther had attacked Tetzl, who was acquiring riches by the dissemination of heretical doctrine. Such devoted supporters of the Church as Eck, Wimpfeling, Karl von Bodmann, Archbishop Henneberg of Mayence, and Duke George of Saxony felt that Rome was too covetous. The Emperor Maximilian had sorrowfully confessed that the Roman curia drew from Germany a revenue a hundredfold greater than his own. *Omnia Romæ Venalia* was as true in Luther's time as it was in Jugurtha's. In Ulrich von Hutten's *Vadiscus, seu Trias Romana*, this line of argument is fiercely wrought out.² In Saxony, as in France on the eve of the Revolution, the taxes were light, and this lightness made the peasant resent the Roman exactions all the more. Luther cleverly took advantage of this resentment, and interlaced political with religious motives in the fashion which made Ranke regard this interlacing as the most striking feature of the sixteenth century. Just as Innocent III failed because he found himself everywhere opposed to the rising forces of nationality, so Leo failed for precisely the same reason. The fact that he appealed to the Christian nobility of the German nation showed how conscious Luther was that he could reckon on the support of the natural leaders of his fellow-countrymen. It is sometimes remarked that few states or dynasties have accomplished more for themselves than Prussia and the Hohenzollerns; and few have been more conspicuously the heirs of time and the beneficiaries of circumstance. What is true of Prussia and the Hohenzollerns is also true of Luther and the Reformation. The time was ripe, the circumstance was propitious, and his genius gave power to both time and circumstance.

As Machiavelli freed the State from considerations of the moral law, Luther likewise freed it from the control of the

¹ On the financial burden imposed by Rome on Germany cf. Aschenberg, *Niderrheinische Blätter* (Dortmund, 1801), 1, 295-301; Bezold, 88 ff.; Dieckhoff, 242-56; Eichmann, *Recursus ab abusu* (Berlin, 1903), 76 ff.; Evers, *Martin Luther*, 2, 447 ff.; Finke, 5 ff.; Förstemann, 1, 62-4; Gebhardt, *Die Gravamina*, 95 ff., 112 ff.; Gemeiner, 4, 132; Hefele-Hergenröther, 8, 792; 9, 89-93; Hutten, *Oratio dissuasoria* (in *Hutteni Opera*, ed. Böcking, 5, 168 ff.) and *Onus ecclesie* (*ibid.*, c. 23); Janssen, *Frankfurts Reichs-korrespondenz*, 2, 978 ff., 983; Janssen-Pastor, 1, 18, 741 ff.; 2, 18, 170 ff.; Kalkoff, *Alexander*, 218-9; May, *Albrecht II*, 1, 159; A. O. Meyer, 70 ff.; Paulus, *Tetzl*, 149; Riffel, 1, 123-34; Sanuto, XXIV, 105, 448; Sinnacher, 7, 263; Theiner, *Mon. Pol.*, 390 ff.; Ulmann, 2, 711; Varrentrap, 48; Werner, 29 ff.; the Canon Xanten, *Codex Trier Sachen und Briefschaften*, fol. 27-39. Finke is an author who requires to be read with caution.

² *Opera Omnia*, 4, p. 145 ff. Cf. 4, p. 157 ff.; Strauss, *Ulrich v. Hutten*, 2, 178-80.

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Church. Is it not the duty of the State, he argued, to check and control all forms of combination injuring the welfare of the people? Thus he won the sympathy of the multitude by his stern attitude to capitalism, luxury and immorality. Anxious advisers pointed out how revolutionary was his undertaking, and his reply to Spalatin was, "I am free from blame, since my only object is to persuade the nobles of Germany to set a limit to the encroachments of the Romanists by passing resolutions and edicts, not by means of the sword; for to fight against an unwarlike clergy would be like fighting against women and children."¹ He was obliged to vindicate himself to his friends against blowing the blast of revolt, but his comrade, Johann Lang, rightly told him that his work was a bugle-call which sounded throughout the whole of Germany.²

The claims of the papacy rested in no small degree on the Old Testament, and in his appeal *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*,³ Luther resorts to the New Testament in order to prove the priesthood of all believers.⁴ He uses the Old Testament, just as Dante used it in his *De Monarchia*, to attack the claim of the Church that, because the Pope crowns the Holy Roman Emperor, therefore the head of the State is subject to the head of the Church. Just as the Israelites were delivered from the Egyptians, just as they were delivered from the might of Babylon, so all the reformers would be delivered from the power of Rome. The Romanists had, in effect, shut themselves within three walls. First, they said the temporal power had no rights over them; second, the Scriptures could only be expounded by the Pope; and third, no one but the Pope could summon a Council. Even if Hus had been wrong in his beliefs, "heretics must be conquered with the pen and not with fire. If to conquer with fire were an art, the executioners would be the most learned doctors on earth." He proceeds to level the three walls to the foundations, praising the Greeks and all who had separated themselves from this Babylon. The element of negation is then prominent in his pamphlet. It is an element not only in the Reformation, but

¹ Feb. 27, 1521, *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 90.

² *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 471, 475, 478, 482 ff., 569 f., 582 ff.; Evers, 3, 492-7; Kolde, *Luther*, I, 267; Bezold, 288, 292, 295; Müller, *Kirchengesch.*, II, i. 244.

³ Schmoller, *Geschichte der nationalökon.*: "Ansichten in Deutschland während der Reformationsperiode" (1861), 36, 39, 102 ff., 228 f.; Kolde, *Luther*, I, 256; A. E. Berger, *Luther*, I, 325; F. v. Bezold, *Geschichte der deutschen Reformation*, 369; Evers, 3, 497-521.

⁴ A. Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3⁴, 830; Maurenbrecher, *Studien und Skizzen*, 342-7.

also in every revolution ever made. Did not the constitutionalists of 1789 begin by demolishing feudalism before they could raise the building of fraternity and equality?

The patriot and the prophet are impossible to dissociate in the composition of the work. There is rage against the offences committed by the papacy, and there is rage against the offences committed by the same authority against his beloved land. In his desire to secure a foundation for his evangel he appeals to the rulers who had listened to it. As the early Fathers asserted the rights of the State, so he followed in their train. The theory of sovereignty that Innocent IV invented on behalf of the papal monarchy he turns to the interests of the German prince.

The attitude of Luther towards the authority of the State is more intelligible if we consider the position the Fathers adopted towards it. Their point of view was influenced by Seneca, who regarded coercive government as due to the increase of vice.¹ Persecuted as the Christians were in the first century, Clement of Rome directs the Corinthians to submit themselves to their "rulers and governors upon earth."² Polycarp meets Ignatius on his way to martyrdom, still the latter asks his followers to "pray also for kings and powers and princes and for them that persecute and hate you."³ The early liturgies attest how faithfully these directions were obeyed.⁴ The apologists naturally employed arguments drawn from this obedience in their defence.⁵ Irenæus follows, perhaps unconsciously, Seneca, and anticipates the Fathers of the sixth and seventh centuries in looking on government as the consequence of man's corruption and as a remedy for this corruption. "They (i.e. men) might attain to some degree of justice, and exercise mutual forbearance, through dread of the sword plainly set before them."⁶ Government to man in a state of innocence is dispensable: to man in a fallen state it is indispensable. He refers to the verse in Proverbs,⁷ "By me kings reign and princes administer justice," and the views of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans,⁸ "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Passages like

¹ Cf. *Epist.* 90, § 38 ff., § 46.

² Clem., LX, LXI.

³ Polyc. ad. Phil., XII.

⁴ Const. Ap. viii, 12.

⁵ Just. Mart., *Apologia*, I, 17; Tertullian, *Apologia*, 30, 39, ad. *Scap.*, 2; Arnob. IV, 36; Athenagoras, *De Leg.*, XXXVII; Dion. Alex., ap. *Eus. H. E.*, VII, XI; Theophilus, I, 11.

⁶ *Adv. Haer.*, V, 24.

⁷ Prov. viii, 15.

⁸ Rom. xiii, 1.

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these satisfy him that authority ultimately comes from God, that He subjected men to the rule of their fellow-men, in order to compel them to some measure of righteousness and just dealing. How far this is removed from the mediæval conception is obvious in the pages of St. Thomas Aquinas, who, in regarding government as the necessary instrument of perfection for mankind, approximates to the classical ideal.¹ At the end of the second century Irenæus plainly considers civil authority binding on all. If the ruler is unjust, God will punish him : resistance is unlawful.

Though Theophilus of Antioch refuses to worship the king, still he is to be "reverenced with lawful honour, for he is not a god but a man appointed by God, not to be worshipped but to be judged justly. For in some respect his stewardship is committed to him by God."² It may well be that he was as suspicious of the lawlessness of the Christian community—or at least a section of it—as Luther was of the anarchical tendencies of the Anabaptists. Justin Martyr, another second-century writer, insists that Christ ordered his followers to pay their taxes, and quotes His words on the duty of rendering to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's. For while they can only worship God, in all other ways they gladly serve their rulers.³

There is much in common between the thought of Theophilus of Antioch and Clement of Alexandria, who considers that the sovereign ought to rule according to the laws.⁴ To the same school of thought belong the ideas of Origen, who thinks that the Church is more divine and more necessary than the State, justifying the refusal of some Christians to serve in the army or in public offices.⁵ The old conception, however, prevails in St. Optatus of Milevis, who has to face the results of the Donatist schism in North Africa. The Church is torn in twain. What is more natural or more obvious than to confront the schismatics with the authority of the Empire? Of course the Donatists protested that the Emperor stood outside matters ecclesiastical. Against this protest Optatus set the conception that the ruler is the representative of God on earth. Did not St. Paul command Christian men to offer up prayers for kings and those set in authority? It is quite true that the Empire is not in the

¹ Cf. *De Regimine Principum*, passim.

² Ad Autolycum, I, 11.

³ *First Apology*, 17.

⁴ *Strom.*, I, 24. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Prima Secunda*, qu. xc.

⁵ *Contra Celsum*, VIII, 73-5.

Church, nevertheless to Optatus as to Ambrose the Church is in the Empire. There is no one over the Emperor save God only, who made him Emperor.¹ The day when Constantine was to be the patron and protector of the Church was in sight, and the protests of Donatus were unavailing.

The fall of Adam dominates the thought of St. Ambrose, who conceives that the task of government is divine, for it is the sovereign remedy for sin. According to him the authority of rulers is imposed on the foolish in order that they, no matter how unwillingly, may obey the wise.² The Emperor is the son of the Church.³ It is an easy transition to St. Austin, who entertains the same conception of the functions of the State.⁴ Like St. Optatus, he firmly holds that the ruler is the representative of God. True, there are emperors as evil as Nero, but even such as he receive their power through the providence of God, when He judges that any nation may stand in need of such governors.⁵ The State may be a *grande latrocinium*. It may also, when Christian, merge itself in the Church.⁶ The civil power thereby becomes the servant of the Church, and its officers obey her behests. Indeed the ecclesiastical society takes the place of the *civitas superna*,⁷ and becomes the only true earthly *civitas*.⁸

The conception that the ruler represents God grows. To Ambrosiaster the king is revered on earth as the "Vicar of God." He has "the image of God as the bishop has that of Christ."⁹ Clearly to this writer the sovereign receives his authority directly from God Himself, a standpoint familiar to Luther. From the time of Constantine, the Emperor was regarded as invested with a certain spiritual character and authority.¹⁰ He was acknowledged, at least by those who considered him orthodox, to possess the right of taking a prominent part in ecclesiastical affairs, of summoning councils, issuing edicts, proscribing heresy, and imposing the true faith on his subjects by his sovereign word. His person, acts, and

¹ *De Schisma Donatistarum*, III, 3; Ambrose, Ep. xxi, 36; *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvii.* 43.

² *Epist.*, XXXVIII, 8.

³ *Ibid.*, XXI, 36; *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvii.* 43.

⁴ *Quar. Prop. ex Ep. ad Rom.*, 72; *De Civ. Dei*, XIX, 15.

⁵ *De Civ. Dei*, V, 19, 21.

⁶ *Epist.*, 105, 5, 6.

⁷ *Serm.* 214, 11.

⁸ *Epist.*, 136, 16, 17; cf. *De Civ. Dei*, XIX, XXI.

⁹ Ambrosiaster (Pseudo-Austin), *Quæstiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, XCI, XXXV.

¹⁰ Euseb., *De Vita Constant.*, I, 44, III, 10; Mansi, XI, 6; XII, 976.

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letters were characterized as "sacred"; his office was a divine creation. Did not his authority spring directly from the Deity?

No one was more impressed by the feeling of reverence for the Emperor than Gregory the Great was. In the spirit of Cicero¹ he holds that men are equal, but they are different in condition as a result of sin. As all men do not live equally well, one man must be ruled by another; there is a brutal tendency in mankind which can only be repressed by fear.² In the same fashion as both St. Austin and St. Isidore of Seville, he wrestles with the problem of the bad ruler.³ To Gregory the sovereign was the Lord's anointed, God's earthly representative. What, however, was the duty of the subject if the emperor did not live in conformity to his high calling? To him the path of duty is plain. The ruler, good or evil, must be revered as the minister of God, who bore His sword. Is any proof of this standpoint required? In that case the Old Testament furnishes clear guidance. Was not Saul an evil king? Was not David a good subject? And yet did not David refuse to lay his hand on the Lord's anointed? Did he not even repent that he cut off the hem of Saul's garment? Good subjects therefore will not even criticize rashly or violently the conduct of bad rulers: for to resist or offend against a ruler is to offend against God, who has set him over men.⁴ That this is no casual *obiter dictum* is evident from his treatise on the Book of Job, where he urges the same attitude on the part of the subject. At the same time Gregory was clear that the Bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter, was the supremely constituted authority in the Church. The two conceptions are irreconcilable, but this no more distressed him than it did Cyprian. There are few Carlstadts in the world, and perhaps it is as well for the happiness of mankind.

Gregory the Great saw no opposition between Ecclesia and Republica, though he plainly perceived the opposition between Ecclesia and Sæculum, or the world. Cæsar was to confine himself to the things which were Cæsar's. His only concern with the things of God was when the law and order of the Church were exposed to danger.⁵ Was action to be taken

¹ *De Leg.*, I, 10, 28-12, 33.

² *Exp. Mor.*, in Job xxi. 15.

³ *Libri Moraliū* in Job xxv. 16.

⁴ *Regulæ Pastoris*, III, 4; *Mor.*, XXII, 56; XXV, 34 ff. Cf. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. France*, V, 19.

⁵ *Epist.*, XI, 29.

against the pagans, the heretics or even against ecclesiastics? ¹ The Emperor hastened to the assistance of Gregory when his assistance was invoked.² There was—there always is—a delicate border-line. The Church plainly had a duty towards the poor, the weak and the oppressed.³ If an imperial officer was guilty of grave crime, she no less plainly felt bound to interfere. Still, Gregory considered that bishops ought not to meddle with matters belonging to the jurisdiction of Cæsar.⁴ The character of Gregory forms a curious contradiction. At times he was independent in spirit as Luther himself, addressing the Emperor in terms which the reformer scarcely exceeded in addressing Leo X. In life, if not in his study, Gregory was as subservient as any Lutheran pastor was to his prince. In this sense it is not too much to say that Gregory the Great and Luther were *servi servorum* of man, not of God.

The secular estates, already covetous of increased power and independence, were invited in the fiery pages of *The Christian Nobility* to take their stand against the papacy and the hierarchy, just as they would against a destroyer of Christendom,⁵ and “to punish them severely” for different disorders, fiscal and others, and “for their abuse of excommunication and their shocking blasphemies against the name of God.”⁶ In short, could they not “put an end to the whole affair”? The State has also a moral or ethical nature: it is necessary to man, existing from the beginnings of the race. This comes out plainly in *A Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. There the political philosopher claims that “no laws can be imposed upon Christians by any authority whatsoever, neither by man nor by angels, except with their own consent, for we are free of all things.”⁷ “What is done otherwise is gross tyranny. . . . We may not become the servants of men.” “But few there are who know the joy of Christian liberty.”⁸

Luther shows the Emperor, the Princes, and the whole German nobility the method by which Germany may break away from Rome, and undertake its own reformation. He sets to work to remove the distinction between the clerical and the

¹ *Epp.*, I, 72; II, 29; III, 59; IV, 7, 26, 32; V, 7, 32; VI, 61; VIII, 4, 19; XI, 12, 37; XIII, 36.

² Cf. *Mor.*, XXXI, 8.

³ *Epp.*, I, 39A, 47, 59; V, 38; IX, 4, 55, 182; XI, 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IX, 76. Cf. IX, 47, 53.

⁵ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 428; Erl. ed., 21, p. 307.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 429; Erl. ed., 21, p. 307.

⁷ *De captiv. babyl.*, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 537; Erl. ed., 5, p. 70.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 536; Erl. ed., 5, pp. 68, 70.

lay estate. The law of the land covers every one within the bounds of the kingdom, clergy as well as laity. The ecclesiastical authority of Rome therefore ceases, a view warmly attacked by Prierias in his able reply.¹ His view of all ecclesiastical authority, anticipating Bodin's opinion, excludes every extension of that authority to the sphere of political or civil life. Every one living within the boundaries of any given State is subject to its laws, and is not subject to the laws of any outside body. In fact, mediæval unity was essentially false: it was a principle of domination destroying the liberty of the individual, and thereby that of the State. By breaking this unity Luther made possible the era of modern nations.

All men are priests, Luther concludes. His teaching is in no wise new: the Fathers emphasize the priesthood of the laity just as much as he. Ignatius and Polycarp make no mention of a sacrificial priesthood. Justin Martyr, for example, points out that all Christians "are the true high-priestly race of God."² According to Irenæus, "all the righteous possess the sacerdotal rank"³ and "all the disciples of the Lord are Levites and priests." Tertullian, when a Montanist, asks, "Are not even we laics priests?"⁴ He uses the terms presbyter and sacerdos interchangeably. In the same strain Origen inquires if the layman knows his privileges. "Dost thou not know," he demands, "that the priesthood is given to thee also, that is, to all the Church of God and the people of believers?"⁵ He constantly speaks of the true Christian as a priest.⁶ According to Jerome the priesthood of the layman is his baptism.⁷ St. Austin maintains that "He gives the name priesthood to the very people whose priest is the mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus."⁸ Nor did this conception disappear in the Middle Ages. Marsilius of Padua holds that all priests, be they popes, cardinals or bishops, are alike in their essential power of absolution of sin and the consecration of the elements in Holy Communion. It is a pregnant fact

¹ *Errata et argumenta Martini Luteris recitata, detecta, repulsa et copiosissime trita: per Fratrem Silvestrum Prieratem, Magistri sacri palatii, Romæ, 1520. Werke, Weim. ed., 6, pp. 328-9; Erl. ed., 2, pp. 79-80; Kampschulte, Univ. Erfurt, 2, 77.*

² *Dial.*, 116 ff. Cf. *Tryph.*, 117.

³ *Haer.*, IV, VIII, 3; V, XXXIV, 3.

⁴ *De Exhort. Cast.*, 7.

⁵ *In Lev. Hom.*, IX, § 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 6; VI, 5; IX, 1, 8; XIII, 5.

⁷ c. Lucif., 4.

⁸ *De Civ. Dei.*, XVII, V, 5.

that Philip Melanchthon and John Calvin, the two most influential of the Reformation theologians, were laymen.

John Hus believed that the essence of the Church lay in its being the assembly of believers acknowledging Christ alone as her head. There is in it only one class, and all the spiritual belong to it. This view Luther always held. It is as clear in his *Exposition of the Psalms* in 1539 as it is in 1520. Under this conviction he sets the hierarchy aside, and the secular powers have authority to do so. When they are on the side of the gospel, they may exercise their great power unhindered, "even against Pope, bishop, priest, monk, or nun, or whatever else there be."¹ "St. Paul says to all Christians, Let every soul—hence, I suppose, even the Pope himself—be subject to the higher powers, for they bear not the sword in vain." ". . . St. Peter too foretold that men would arise who would despise the temporal rulers, which has indeed come to pass through the rights of the clergy." The rulers ought to appear before the ordinary courts of the land. Indeed "the secular power has become a member of the ghostly body, and, though its office is temporal, yet it has been raised to a spiritual dignity; its work may now be done with absolute freedom and unhindered among all the members of the whole body, punishing and compelling where guilt deserves it or necessity demands it, regardless of Pope, bishop, priest, let them threaten and ban as much as they please."² Here is the substitution of secular for ecclesiastical authority. What Henry VIII did in England, Philip II in Spain, Luther did in Germany. The English substitution was fundamentally altered by the Puritans, but Louis XIV and Joseph II can trace their descent from their German parent. To Luther as to Althusius, to German thinkers as to Anglican divines, the civil power is indeed a spiritual body. To the reformer the State is no mere police State, no body whose chief duty is to ensure the keeping of contracts. His mind contains in germ the wonderful conception of Edmund Burke that the State is a divine institution. For, according to the Irish thinker, "without society man could not by any possibility arrive at that perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it. He, the Divine Author, gave us our nature to be perfected by our virtue. He must therefore have willed the means of its perfection. He must therefore have willed the State, and He willed its connexion with Himself the source of all perfection." It is in truth a conception as old

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 409; Erl. ed., 21, p. 284.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 410; Erl. ed., 21, p. 285.

as Cicero, and as recent as Hegel, and the powerful school founded by Fichte and himself. Society is a partnership, an association for the greater purposes of our being, for the promotion of science, art, virtue. "It is," Burke holds with passion, "not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born."

"Most of the Popes have been without faith," comments Luther. "Ought not Christians, who are all priests, also have the right to judge and decide what is true and false in matters of faith?" "If we are all priests, how then shall we not have the right to discriminate and judge what is right and wrong in faith? What, otherwise, becomes of the saying of Paul in 1 Corinthians ii. 15, 'he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man,' and again, 'Having all the same spirit of faith,' 2 Corinthians iv. 13? How then should we not perceive, just as well as an unbelieving Pope, what is in agreement with faith and what not? These and many other passages are intended to give us courage and make us free, so that we may not be frightened away from the spirit of liberty,¹ as Paul calls it, by the fictions of the Popes, but rather judge freely, according to our understanding of the Scriptures, of all things that they do or leave undone, and force them to follow what is better and not their own reason."²

The sign had taken the place of the thing signified. The priest had usurped the place of all the faithful: this process must be reversed. It is vital. Other matters, however, are indifferent. There is no danger, for example, in Holy Communion, in believing that the bread is present or not present after its consecration. There is tolerance for customs or ordinances not injurious to the faith. In effect, Luther here confers on every one of the faithful the fullest right of private judgment as regards both doctrines and doctors, limiting it by no authority save that of the Word of God as explained by the Christian himself. There is just a hint that the writer may expound authoritatively. "A little man may have a right comprehension; why then should we not follow him?" and,

¹ 2 Corinthians iii. 17.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 412; Erl. ed., 21, p. 288.

he pointedly remarks, trust is to be placed in one "who has the Scripture on his side."¹ This freedom of interpretation was not to extend for the present to freedom from the duty of obeying the secular authorities. "Even when they do what is wrong, still God wills that they should be obeyed without evasion or conspiracy."²

A scholar like Erasmus was inevitably shocked by this removal of doctrinal matters from the measured opinion of the expert to that of *hoi polloi*. Doubtless private judgment and personal inspiration tended towards toleration, but he shrank from the cost. What was to place an effective check on the vagaries of private judgment? What was to be the criterion of personal inspiration? Was a visible Church possible under these conditions? In fable Cadmus has less renown for inventing the alphabet than for sowing the dragon's teeth. So it has been with Luther. His passionate protest on behalf of the independence of the State is forgotten: the wars to which it gave rise are keenly remembered.

In his sermon on good works³ in 1520 before Duke John of Saxony he made the remarkable application of the principle of the abrogation of all authority in the name of those who ruled in defiance of God. People must not, he holds, in accordance with Acts v. 29, allow themselves to be forced to act contrary to God's law. "If a prince whose cause is obviously unjust wishes to make war, he must not be followed or assisted because God has commanded us not to kill our neighbour or do him injury."⁴ He qualified, however, this strong statement, saying that "even though the authorities act unjustly, God wills that they should be obeyed without deceit . . . for to suffer unjustly harms no man's soul, indeed it is profitable to it."⁵

By the end of August 1520 another new book was in the press. The title of the new Latin publication, which was immediately translated into German, was *A Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*.⁶ In the second book, as in the first and third, there is the same exaltation of private judgment. "Neither Pope, nor bishop, nor any man has a right to dictate even a syllable to the Christian without his own

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 411; Erl. ed., 21, p. 287.

² *Ibid.*, p. 459.

³ *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 16, 123-6, 133-8, 142, 194-202, 216-8; *Briefe* (De Wette), 1, 419-21, 435 ff., 447-8; *Corp. Reform.*, 1, 201; Evers, 3, 197-210.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 265; Erl. ed., 16², p. 206.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 259; Erl. ed., 16², p. 198.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 584 ff.; Erl. ed., 5, p. 13 ff.; Evers, 3, 533-61.

consent, any other course is pure tyranny.”¹ If you have grasped the Word in faith, then according to *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, “you have fulfilled all the commandments, and must be free from all things”: the believer becomes “spiritually lord of all,” and by virtue of his transcendent dignity, “he has power over all things.”² With this reliance on individual reason is combined the mystical feeling. There exists, he thinks, in the assembly of the faithful and through the illumination of the Divine Spirit, a certain “inward sense of judging concerning doctrine, a sense which, though it cannot be proved, is nevertheless absolutely certain.” He describes faith as it comes into being in each individual soul, “as the result of a certitude directly inspired of God, a certitude of which he himself is conscious.”³ Making use of these distinctions he is able to perceive what books of the Bible are stamped with the true apostolic spirit and those not so stamped, for instance, the less trustworthy Epistle of St. James, of which the teaching on good works contradicts his own. Inevitably the arbitrariness with which the writer questions facts of faith or usages dating from the early ages of the Church fostered a spirit of criticism akin to the spirit of revolt, and Henry VIII detected the existence of this spirit in it.

The Sacraments had been perverted, and in fact led into a Babylonian captivity. The withholding of the Cup in the Eucharist he calls the first captivity, the belief in transubstantiation the second captivity, and a third was the perversion of the meaning and uses of the rite Jesus had instituted. He sets forth his doctrine of consubstantiation, carefully insisting on the toleration of the believers in transubstantiation. Why cannot the body of Christ be under the substance of the bread as it is in the accidents? Fire and iron are two substances; they are mixed in the red fire so that each part is fire and iron. Why can-

¹ *De captiv. babyl.*, Werke, Weim. ed., 6, pp. 484 (497)–573; *Opp. lat. var.*, 5, pp. 16–118: “Dico itaque: Neque papa neque episcopus neque ullus hominum habet ius unius syllabæ constituendæ super christianum hominem, nisi id fiat eiusdem consensu: quidquid aliter fit, tyrannico spiritu fit.” On the superfluosity of laws, cf. Werke, Weim. ed., 6, p. 554; Erl. ed., 5, p. 94: “Hoc scio, nullam rempublicam legibus feliciter administrari. . . . Quod adsit eruditio divina cum prudentia naturali, plane superfluum noxium et scriptas leges habere; super omnia autem caritas nullis prorsus legibus indiget.” Cf. also Werke, Weim. ed., 6, p. 555; Erl. ed., 5, p. 94: “Christianis per Christum libertas donata est super leges hominum.”

² *Von der Freyheyte ynes Christen Menschen*, Werke, Weim. ed., 7, pp. 23, 27 ff.; Erl. ed., 27, pp. 179, 185 ff.

³ Werke, Weim. ed., 6, p. 561; Erl. ed., 5, p. 102; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, 2^a, 175, 180–1, 206–7, 249–53; I. oofs, *Leitfaden der Dogmengesch.*, 4, 711, 721 ff., 737.

not the body of Christ be, by a very much stronger reason, in all the parts of the substance of the bread? No doubt he maintains a belief in three of the Seven Sacraments of the Church, namely Baptism, Penance, and the Lord's Supper, but the removal of four from this rank generated a sceptical tendency. Even the three retained must be set free from the bondage in which the papacy holds them: they had no other efficacy than that given them by faith. Moreover, they must take a national form. The Mass must be, for instance, a German Mass. The estate of matrimony no longer possesses its sacramental character, and the ecclesiastical impediments to it are man-made inventions, and, speaking of the separation allowed by these laws, he declares that to him bigamy is preferable, anticipating the calamitous advice he gave Philip of Hesse in 1540. The celibacy of the clergy he sweeps away, and with it many of the existing restrictions on marriage.

The gravity of his task seems for the moment to appal him, for he says he is loth to decide anything, but neither popes nor bishops are to give decisions. "If, however," he holds, "two well-instructed and worthy men were to agree in Christ's name, and speak according to the spirit of Christ, then I would prefer their judgment before all the Councils, which are only revered on account of their number and the worldly reputation of the people there assembled, no regard being paid to their learning and holiness."¹ The vagueness of the plan is evident. Who, for example, is to determine that the spirit of Christ is present in the judgment of two well-instructed men? With the seeming conviction that this process of determination is easy he concludes by committing the book to the hands of all the pious, that is, those who wish to understand aright the sense of the Bible and the true use of the Sacraments.

Erasmus read it and was wounded by its violence. Luther is on one side: he, or rather the Church, is on another. The fear steals over the scholar's mind that there is a fight, and a fight to the death, before him. The account of the Mass particularly repelled him. Luther held that Christ's sacrifice on the cross had been deemed insufficient by the importance attached to the sacrifice of the Mass. The Supper was God's work for man. The moment it received a sacrificial value it became man's work for God. Now and henceforth he bent all his energies on the abolition of the Mass. No one was better aware than he that it was the one thing that mattered.²

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 560; Erl. ed., 5, p. 101.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 10², p. 22; Erl. ed., 6, p. 445; Köstlin, *Luther's*

The Reformation became, under the influence of these ideas, a revolution. For the next century and a half the sword and the stake are the arguments employed. In Germany there is the Thirty Years' War, in France the wars of religion, and in England the scaffold for the orthodox and unorthodox alike. In no other fashion could the vast change have taken place. The Church ruled by right divine, and the only method of destroying any divine right is force. Luther felt this, and, from a far different standpoint, Charles I was one day to feel it. It is tempting to imagine that the growth of learning could have accomplished in peace what was accomplished by brutal violence. The world wanted the classics properly edited. Its sorest need, however, was faith. It is significant that in Italy the Renaissance allied itself with scepticism, whereas in Germany such an alliance was not possible. From the Council of Vienne, 1311, men had recognized the necessity for reform in the Church. The humanists aimed at freedom for learning, Luther at freedom for the Church, whose doctrine must be pure, and whose organization must be reformed. The conciliar movement failed in the task. The Church refused reform: she was confronted with revolution in its place.

The last great tract of this year, *On the Freedom of a Christian Man*,¹ breathed the very spirit of individualism to an even greater extent than the tract Calvin wrote on this subject in 1539. Like the *Decretum* of Gratian, it is one of the most important political pamphlets ever published. The doctrine of the sovereignty of the individual was fraught with weighty consequences in the sixteenth century, and with almost weightier in its influence on Rousseau, and thereby on the French Revolution, in the eighteenth. Man emerged from his position as a mere member of the Church or the State, and acquired an individuality of his own. In his emergence Luther occupies no mean place. Alongside him stands the inventor of printing, thereby permitting free circulation to ideas which for the first time entered the minds of more than a select few. Gutenberg rendered the work of Luther possible: the reformer was among the first to use the printing-press for popular effect. Alongside the inventor of printing stands that notable man, the inventor

Theologie, 1^a, 338-40, 527; 2^a, 243, 245; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 527, 616, 694, 780 ff.; Köhler, *Katholizismus u. Reformation*, 46; Loofts, *Leitfaden der Dogmengesch.*, 863; K. Jäger, *Luther's religiöse Interesse an seiner Lehre von der Realpräsenz* (Giessen, 1900), 27.

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, pp. 12 (20)-38; Erl. ed., 27, pp. 175-99. It is printed in Latin in *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 39 ff.; Erl. ed., 4, p. 206 ff. It is printed in German in *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 12 ff.; Erl. ed., 27, p. 175 ff.

of gunpowder, thereby putting into the hands of all an argument against authority more potent than that of all the philosophers from Marsilius of Padua to Luther. As Leonardo da Vinci held, truth is the daughter of time.

The old order had been the Empire or the Church, the commune, the guild, the scholastic system: the individual is always part of some group, and has no existence apart from it. The new order was the State, the national Church, the merchant, the individual. The old order had been authority and asceticism: the new was reason and joy in the whole of life. For a thousand years there had been as much authority in social life as in intellectual. Unknown men had been content to build the cathedrals of the Middle Ages, whereas the men of the New Age asserted themselves to the utmost. The thirst for glory became unquenchable. Genius prevents man finding an equal, pride prevents him from lowering himself to an inferior. The statues used to be within the cathedral, for they were erected to the glory of God. Now they stood in the market-place to be seen of men. Man used to be bound to a bishop, a lord, a municipality, to a school, or a body. Now he proudly steps on the stage as himself, eager to develop his capacities for his own benefit, with boundless confidence in his will, his superiority and his infinite variety. The body dissolves into the units which compose it. There is no longer the papacy: there is the Pope, who is a lord like other lords. There is no longer the Holy Roman Empire: there is the Emperor who is also a lord no more than other lords. There is no longer the city: there is the prince. There is no longer the university: there is the spirit of humanism. The painter ceases to depict the group: the portrait is his masterpiece. He used to describe on the walls of cemeteries the triumph of death: now he describes on the walls of houses the triumph of life. The quest is no more the One in the Many: it is the Many in the One.

In this ferment Luther's *Freedom of a Christian Man*¹ was the electric spark which exploded the gunpowder. The time and the place of the appearance of a doctrine are no less important than the doctrine itself. In America stress was laid on the equality of man, but it was an equality to be sought within the existing political order. The war between North and South for the liberation of the slave is no doubt an exception, yet that war was as much fought over the right of a State to

¹ Döllinger, *Luther, eine Skizze* (in Wetzer and Welte, *Kirchenlexikon*), 8², col. 319 ff., and his *Die Reformation*, I, 5, 33, 587; Holl, 9; W. Köhler, *Denkfes Luther*, 42; Köstlin, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 223 ff.

secede as over any other matter. The French, more logical than the Americans, made the equality of man a vital issue, and with them its propaganda was as intense as if it had been a question of faith. How different was the destiny which awaited the theory of the equality of all in France, and in the United States! Peter Lombard believed as fervently as Luther in justification by faith. With the one it was a mere dogma, with the other it was the most living of all issues, and hence its different influence on the fortunes of the human race.

The little pamphlet of thirty pages opens with the paradox that "A Christian man is the dutiful servant of all, subject to every one." It is characteristic of the author that he appeals for the proof of the truth of this paradox not to Jesus, Who taught it, but to St. Paul. The servitude of the body is akin to slavery which, like St. Austin, he looked upon partly as a punishment of sin. This servitude does not extend to the soul, for in God's Holy Word the soul lives a free and godly life, enjoying wisdom, liberty, and everything that is good. True, the inward man, in his freedom and righteousness by faith, has no need of any law or good works, but, since we are not completely spiritual, we are compelled to exercise the body by means of discipline lest it resist the inward man. That is, the will which rebels against God must be quelled more and more, so far as the carnal mind calls for subjugation, in order that the works which proceed from faith may be performed out of pure charity. In all his labours man must endeavour to direct his attention towards serving and being helpful to his neighbour. This is to serve God freely and joyfully. By thus acting he will defy the upholders of ceremonies and the enemies of liberty who cling to the ordinances of the Church. In this way he is teaching true Christian freedom, which sets "the heart free from all sins, laws, and ordinances, and which is so far above all liberty as the heavens are above the earth."¹ All desired to read such teaching, with the result that, like all Luther's books, it speedily ran through many editions.²

Thus he tried to get rid of the old doctrine of good works. Faith is everything, and he derives from faith the whole process of justification and virtue which God alone produces in us. The doctrine of *opus operatum* was therefore abhorrent to him. The moving eloquence of the language employed brought home to the heart of the people that it was enough to have experienced the power of faith in tribulation, temptations, anxieties,

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 39; Erl. ed., 27, p. 199.

² *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 5, p. 219 ff.

and struggles to understand that in it lay the true freedom of a Christian man. The spirit of the priesthood of all breathes in every word of the booklet as it breathed in the teaching of John Hus.¹ The believer, incorporated with Jesus by faith, receives from him his priesthood. All are priests like the Saviour with Whom all are one. The peasant tills the ground, the priest celebrates Holy Communion—that is all. There is no difference between them save that of office. In a word, Orders are not a sacrament: they are a matter of Church organization. There was no monopoly of the priesthood: it was the privilege of all faithful Christians. Inevitably it suggested that a national Church could come into being without being in any wise cut off from the communion of saints or fellowship with the Divine Head of one great body. The writer insisted, with all the eloquence at his command, upon the dignity which faith and a state of grace could impart to every calling, even the very humblest. A thought had escaped from a soul that was common to all and made an immediate appeal to every humble heart. *The Freedom of a Christian Man* is a book for every century, though it bears the distinguishing marks of its own. Luther's vivid writing impressed on all that life in this world, and the most insignificant employment, when illumined by religion, has in it something of the infinite. The German people had outgrown the conception of the duality of life, and found the new conception of its essential unity. One outstanding effect was the emphasis laid on vocation in relation to daily occupation. The "Saint's Rest" was in the world to come: in this he was to labour at his calling. Business henceforth became a sacred office in which it was a man's bounden duty to do his utmost *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*. Luther was fortunate in the moment in which he launched forth this idea, for Europe was about to change from the agricultural to the capitalistic system. The Reformation occurred in the midst of the beginning of modern capitalism. This new industrial form gave rise to an enormously potential revolutionary force. The sanctity of the monastic life was transferred to the common round, the trivial task. Man no longer was made for a function: a function was made for man. The "religious" were no longer men and women in a monastery: life and religion were now fundamentally one, a conception plainly held by Erasmus in his delightful book on Christian marriage.² Christianity and reli-

¹ On the effects of this conception cf. Maurenbrecher, *Studien und Skizzen*, pp. 342-7.

² Hagen, 2, pp. 223-4.

gion, Erasmus said, were not bound up with any particular order or way of life : the whole family, according to Christ's teaching, was one great family—one great cloister. The journey of a Solon, a Pythagoras, a Plato, was just as meritorious as the seclusion of a monk. Did not the Apostles, especially Paul, travel about the world ? Priestly ideals no longer dominated men, and a new lay attitude to the world replaced the ecclesiastical attitude of the Middle Ages. In mediæval cathedrals there were two distinct churches : that of the clergy, which has its centre in the choir, and that of the parish. The two churches, as it were, now became one. In the first tract of Luther, the life of the State was to be one. In the second, the life of man was to be one. In the third, the life of the State and that of the individual were to be one : they were to be joined in harmonious union, a union in which neither was to attain mastery over the other. Formerly it was *orare est laborare* : now it was *laborare est orare*, with the result that a justification was at once given to social service, the worth of which the world is only beginning to realize. Luther secularizes monasticism¹ just as Erasmus secularizes knowledge.

There have always been the esoteric and the exoteric schools in religion : this is no mediæval idea.² The adepts of the Pythagorean and Orphic rituals marked this distinction just as much as the Platonist³ and the Stoic. The Essene and the Therapeutæ were essentially men who believed there was a higher life reserved for a few choice spirits, utterly unattainable by the ordinary man. Did not the scribe disdain "this people that knoweth not the Law" ?

Christian ethics till now had a divided ideal. It taught some men devotion to others, and self-sacrifice on their behalf. It taught holiness and righteousness as the ideal of the monk and the nun. The two ideals were parallel and independent. Luther joined them in the one end of human service. The mediævalist had thought that what was natural was wrong. Luther, like Erasmus, taught that what was natural was right. Human life, in its innermost being, is in harmony with the eternal law of morality. No doubt a heavy price had to be paid for the change. For example, the denial of the honour accorded throughout the Middle Ages to virginity had the effect of making the social position of woman wholly dependent on her marriage. The state of poverty was once the sign of a

¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologia*, II, i, 108 ; the letter of Pope Siricius, A.D. 385 to Himerius.

² Aquinas, *Summa*, II, 2, qu. 88.

³ *Timæus*, p. 28.

saint : now it was the mark of failure. Other-worldliness was no longer the motive. A good citizen of this earth was thus preparing for his citizenship in the New Jerusalem. He is a saved man, and his life on earth is as sacred as in heaven.¹ Other-worldliness had rendered men indifferent to the secrets of the Universe, of the ground beneath them and the heavens above them. They had been so preoccupied with the Word of God that they omitted to consider the works of God. The globe acquired a fascination for mankind hitherto unknown. Like Canning, the reformer called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old.

There are phrases in other writings of Luther which seem far removed from the spirit of this tract. In them he manifests as real a dislike as Machiavelli of "Master Omnes," "the many-headed monster." Nevertheless, we must sharply distinguish between the relations the writer is contemplating. When he speaks of the attitude of man to God, he works himself up into a dislike of the mob. When he discusses the attitude of man to man this dislike is absent. He is, however, clear that "we must not hearken too much to the mob, for they are fond of raging. . . . They have no idea of self-restraint or how to exercise it."² In 1523 he contemplated marriages between nobles and the daughter of the burghers, of the rising merchant class.³ Serfdom, however, did not strike him as contrary to Christ.⁴ "When the mother carefully looks after her family, provides for her children, feeds them, washes them and rocks them in the cradle," her calling is "a happy and a holy one."⁵

It is easy to make a catena from writers who preach the doctrine of the freedom of a Christian man before Luther. Men like Andreas Proles,⁶ Vicar-General of the Saxon Augustinian Congregation, before 1503 ; like Gottschalk Hollen, the Westphalian preacher, in 1517 ; manuals like the *Wyhegertlin*⁷ and the *Ermahnung*⁸ are just as emphatic and as plain-spoken on the worth of work. Luther, however, spoke with that power over men which they lack. It is significant that in the

¹ M. Weber points out that the Calvinist had a calling not merely in religion but also in business. Cf. his *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* in *Archiv. für Socialwissenschaft und Socialpolitik*, XX. For the effect of *Beruf* (calling), cf. p. 38 ff. and Part 2, 21, pp. 1-110.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 19, p. 635 ; Erl. ed., 22, p. 259. *Ob Kriegsleutte auch ynn seligen Stande seyn künden ?* (1526).

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 157 ; Erl. ed., 28, p. 200.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 16, p. 244 ; 36, p. 659 ; Erl. ed., 35, p. 233 ; 48, p. 385.

⁵ *Opp. lat. exeg.*, 4, pp. 202-4.

⁶ Sermon on marriage in his *Sermones dominicales*, Leipzig, 1530.

⁷ Mayence, 1509.

⁸ Mayence, 1513.

pre-Lutheran Bible, e.g. that which came from Augsburg in 1487, the translation of Ecclus. xi. 22, is "Trust God, and stay in thy place," whereas Luther rendered it "Trust in God and abide by thy calling."

Luther indeed restored to the heart the freedom that had long been denied to it. We might say of him what Voltaire said of Montesquieu, that humanity had lost its title-deeds and Luther had recovered them. There was dignity in the world below, and there was also communion with Christ above. To the man who groaned under the formalism of those days, the words of the prophet came like the breath of life itself. With the Waldensians, with Savonarola, he insisted on the sense of direct responsibility to, and direct dependence on, God alone. He holds that God means "to care for each soul separately as though there were only the one soul and no other on earth existed."¹ His mysticism aided him in his appeal to man. "Where the heart thus hears the voice of Christ," he writes, "it must needs become glad, receive the deepest comfort and be filled with sweetness towards Christ, loving Him and ever after troubling nothing about laws and works. For who can hurt such a heart or cause it alarm? Should sin or death befall it, it simply calls to mind that Christ's righteousness is its own and then, as we have said, sin disappears before faith in the righteousness of Christ. With the apostle, it learns to defy death and sin, and to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."²

For the Church and for its opponent, Luther, the question of sin and of deliverance from its burden is fundamental. The sinner comes to the Church and finds in her that this question has absorbed all her energies. Her priests offer the sacrifice of the Mass, and thereby, *ex opere operato*, he obtains pardon for the past, and strength for the future. To Luther it seemed that the power of this sacrifice was so enormous that it acted without any participation on the part of the individual.

True, the Church proclaimed the love of God, the atonement of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. In practice, however, her whole life turned on the Mass: the altar was as much the centre of the parish church as its doctrine was the heart of Church life. Only the Church possesses the Mass, only

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 36, p. 42.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 29. The Scriptural quotation is from 1 Cor. xv. 55 ff.

the Church can offer the Body and the Blood of Christ. Inevitably corporate life prevails over individual. Just as inevitably there was, in the reformer's judgment, the tendency to make the objective element grow at the expense of the subjective. The priest absolved the sinner: that was objective. Could he be sure that the sinner was truly penitent? It was this subjective aspect which appealed to Luther. It seemed to him that instead of Christ being the one mediator between God and man, the order of the priesthood stepped in. The Mass, then, was the tremendous obstacle to true religion: it, and it alone, mattered. Were it swept away, all attempts at mediatorship save that of the Saviour were swept away with it. Then between God and man there was none to interfere. God bestowed upon the sinner the gift of pardon and peace, making him a member of that priesthood to which all the faithful belong. Luther's own teaching in many respects leant as much to passivity as that of the Church he was attacking. The amazing result of it, however, is that he himself was among the most forceful of the sons of men. Now and then when he shrank from work which fell to his lot he felt a compelling energy. After all it was no longer he, but God who wrought within him. The vital fact was that his will was entirely controlled by God: he simply carried out the decrees of Divine action. The doctrine of predestination was a logical outcome. God chose him from all eternity. The faithful are in His hands. Who shall separate them from Him? Luther consequently felt a superhuman certainty which nothing could shake. Emphasis was no longer on the future: it was all laid on the present. Formerly Luther was preoccupied with his eternal happiness or misery whereas now he came to feel that his life on earth was the great reality. Salvation is here and now: it consists of the condition of a man's soul in the presence of God in his conscience. The visible Church contained unfaithful as well as faithful: the true Church was the invisible composed of none but those who truly believe in God.

Of course when the traditional motives for good works were undermined, it followed that the practice suffered. The people heard that "by this faith all your sins are forgiven you, all corruption within you is overcome, and you yourself are made righteous, true, devout and at peace; all the commandments are fulfilled, and you are set free in all things."¹ "This is Christian liberty . . . that we stand in need of no works for the attainment of piety and salvation."² "The Christian

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 23.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 25.

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becomes by faith so exalted above all things that he is made spiritual lord of all ; for there is nothing that can hinder his being saved.”¹ By faith in Christ man has become sure of salvation : he is “assured of life for evermore, may snap his fingers at the devil, and need no longer tremble before the wrath of God.”

Faith used to mean the submission of the reason to what God has revealed and proposes for belief through his Church. Faith, according to Luther, means personal trust in Christ and the salvation He offers. Like Newman’s position at one time, he found himself face to face with two final existences—God and his own soul. This forms the basis of every “ism” the world contains. He did not find himself face to face with three final existences—his own soul, the world, and God, which alone constitutes the basis of Catholicism. To this German thinker it is sufficient to say that the Christian is “free and has power over all” by a simple appropriation of the merits of Christ : he is purified by a mere acceptance of the merciful love revealed in Christ. “This faith suffices him,” and through it he enjoys the riches of God. This faith is largely a matter of feeling : a man must learn to “taste the true spirit of trials within,” just as the author himself “in his great temptations had been permitted to taste a few drops of faith.”²

Once more he reminds the reader that by faith all are priests, and therefore possess the right “to instruct Christians concerning the faith and the freedom of believers,” yet he cautiously adds that for the preservation of order all cannot teach, and hence some are specially set apart for this purpose. Caution was indeed required. Was not, urged some, the freedom thus encouraged essentially false ? “Here we reply to all those,” he points out, “who are offended at the above language, and who say, ‘Well, if faith is everything and suffices to make us pious, why then are good works commended ? Let us be of good cheer and do nothing.’”³ To this he answers, “No, my friend, not so. It might indeed be thus if you were entirely an inward man and had become completely spiritual and soulful, but this will not happen till the day of judgment.” In so far as a man is of this world and a servant of sin, he maintains, he must rule over his body, and consort with other men. “Here works make their appearance ; idleness is bad. The body must be disciplined in moderation and exercised by

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 27.

² *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 4, p. 206 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 29 ff.

fasting, watching and labour, that it may be obedient and conformable to faith and inwardness, and may not hinder and resist as its nature is when it is not controlled." "But," he continues, "such works must not be done in the belief that thereby a man becomes pious in God's sight; for piety before God consists in faith alone," and it is only "because the soul is purified by faith and loves God that it desires all things to be pure, first of all its own body, and wishes every man likewise to love and praise God."

The multitude listened to this teaching, and, after the manner of multitudes, applied it so broadly as to forget the qualifying clauses. "By faith" man became free and "lord of all." What then was the necessity of works? The inward man, urged the fanatics, has according to this judgment become sufficiently strong and amply independent. "To become entirely spiritual and inward" is admittedly impossible. Moreover, as works spring spontaneously from one who is justified by faith there is no duty in performing them. Breathing is spontaneous, but there is no obligation to breathe in the sense in which there is an obligation to keep the commandments of God. There was another reason for this opposition to good works. This doctrine of the Church was attacked because it gave the ecclesiastical authorities their strong claim on the purse of the laity. The sale of indulgences by Italian cardinals removed money from Germany, and to this national feeling Luther owed not a little of his popularity when he attacked Tetzel. Justification by faith was true according to theology. It was no less true according to patriotism, for it delivered the Germans from paying tribute to an Italian prince. There was the inevitable danger of this liberty degenerating into licence. There were many reasons why Luther believed he had no free will. The doctrine of justification by faith undermined men's sense of moral responsibility. St. Paul warned his converts against the misinterpretation of the conception of liberty, and Luther had to spend much of his time at the same task when his followers ran into the excesses of antinomianism.

The Freedom of a Christian Man, accompanied by a letter, Luther sent to Leo X.¹ This Pope had excommunicated the writer, and now he is informed that the very foundation of his

¹ On the letter cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 3 ff.; Erl. ed., 53, p. 41, for the German original; and *Opp. lat. var.*, p. 240, for the Latin version. Cf. also *Briefwechsel*, 2, 496; *Briefe*, 1, 491, 495 ff.; Tetzel Cyprian, 1, 444, 450; Seidemann, *Miltiz*, 31 f. Luther dedicated *The Freedom of a Christian Man* to Leo X. Cf. *Op. varii argu.*, 4, 219; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 27, 173 ff.; Riederer, 1, 170.

authority is baseless. In the doctrine of justification by faith lies the fulcrum of Archimedes by which the papal Church was to be completely overthrown. The reformer found the freedom of a Christian in individual freedom : the Pope found it in corporate authority. On the struggle between these two principles the whole sixteenth century was to turn. That struggle was one day to make toleration possible.

In this booklet, Luther is obliged to discuss the question of authority. Can the civil power demand obedience from him and his followers in doctrinal matters ? Are Catholics to be left free to practise their religion in districts where the rulers were Lutherans ? Are such rulers to permit deviation from the Wittenberg creed ? It was easy to formulate such questions, but it was exceedingly difficult to find an answer to them. Luther's own Saxon sovereign might be alienated if he proclaimed too freely the right of his friends to resist the Emperor by force. His own friends might be alienated if he proceeded to urge harsh measures against the Anabaptists or the Zwinglians. In the matter of toleration he was essentially opportunist. "In a higher world it may be otherwise," remarks Cardinal Newman, "but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often." In this sense Luther advanced far on the road towards perfection.

Numbers were growing fast in Germany, spreading throughout Alsace and France. Capito informs the reformer that Switzerland, the Rhine districts, even to the ocean, favour him.¹ Luther tells Lang that there are recruits in Italy, France, Brabant and in England.² Towns, especially Nürnberg, Frankfurt, Strassburg, Mulhouse, Zürich, and Bâle were notable centres of Lutheranism, as the emporia of Asia Minor and of Greece had been to the early Church. French cities, distinguished for their zeal, were Paris, Lyons, Meaux, Grenoble, and the district of Bourges, where the tolerant spirit of Margaret of Angoulême counted for much. The time had come when, according to Erasmus, the very publicans would dispute matters of faith. "In all parts of France," wrote Pierre Toussain, "the word of God makes daily progress."³ As in Germany, there were not a few artisans and merchants among the adherents. In February 1521, Froben sends some of Luther's writings to Paris, where they are eagerly bought. Scholars,

¹ Enders, I, No. 150.

² *Ibid.*, 2, No. 172, April 13, 1519.

³ Cf. Toussain to Farel, Aug. 2, 1524, Hermin., I, No. 109 ; Farel to C. Scheffer, April 2, 1524, *ibid.*, No. 97 ; and Sébiville to Coct, Dec. 28, 1524, *ibid.*, No. 132.

theologians, and even members of the Sorbonne approve.¹ In spite of the Bull of 1520 the growth does not slacken. Books continue to arrive at Lyons, covering the neighbourhood. The German business houses have branches from Paris to Lyons, and through these branches the books circulate. What the Roman soldier accomplished for early Christianity the trader accomplished for the Reformation. Glareanus informs Zwingli that a Paris bookseller sold 1400 books.² This widespread circulation agitates men, prepared to receive the new Gospel by the pregnant teaching of Lefèvre d'Étaples. The Parlement,³ August 3, 1521, and the town council of Paris, March 22, show signs of alarm. In July 1523, the Parlement orders a search, and finds at Berquin's house the *Babylonian Captivity*, the treatise on the *Abrogation of Private Masses* and—this is significant—a pamphlet containing extracts from the writings of Luther, Melanchthon, and Carlstadt.⁴ On October 5 the Sorbonne condemns the following works of Melanchthon, his *Loci Communes*, his account of the Leipzig Disputation, his *Commentaries* on the Epistle to the Romans, and the *Declamationes* on St. Paul.⁵ On April 15, 1521, the faculty of theology had condemned the doctrines of Luther. The action of these official bodies is even plainer evidence than private correspondence of the widespread diffusion of the tracts of the reformers.⁶ "These [French] men," according to Clichtowe, "have taken Luther as their master. . . . Under the cry of Christian liberty . . . they grant complete licence, the marriage of priests, the breaking of vows by monks and indeed by every one, the transgression of the precepts of the Church."⁷ "It is," notes Hangest, "a form of sedition."⁸ It is unmistakable that the Reformation in France is not a plant of native growth.

The headquarters of the French Reformation is to be found in its early stages in Wittenberg, and in its later ones in Geneva. Unquestionably from 1521 to 1525 Luther is as much the guiding spirit as Calvin afterwards is. In November 1522,

¹ On the sympathies of the scholars cf. Tschudi to Beatus, May 17, 1519, Beatus Rhenanus, *Briefwechsel*, No. 110; Budé to Flisco, Dec. 13, 1521, *Opp.*, Bâle, 1557, p. 349; cf. also Capito to Erasmus, Oct. 14, 1521, p. 677; Erasmus to Melanchthon, Sept. 6, 1524, p. 819.

² Glareanus to Zwingli, Nov. 1, 1520, ed. Egli, No. 160. The letters from Glareanus and Tschudi to Zwingli in 1519 and 1521 testify to the spread of the movement.

³ *Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 101.

⁴ Du Plessis d'Argentré, II, p. xii.

⁵ *Lib. Conclus.*, f. 113.

⁶ Panzer, *Ann. typogr.*, Nos. 1332, 1371.

⁷ *De veneratione Sanctorum, libri II* (1523), Preface.

⁸ *De libero arbitrio* (1525), Preface.

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Lambert of Avignon arrived in Wittenberg, where he remained to the middle of February 1524.¹ Coct came, and during his short stay tried to establish relations between Luther and the Duke of Savoy.² Others, e.g. French monks, also came in 1526. Lambert and Coct think of establishing a French printing-press in Hamburg for the purpose of spreading in France Luther's books.³ At Strassburg in May 1524, Lambert and Rhellican begin to translate some sermons. The former translates the *Smaller Catechism*, the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Symbol*, and the *Penitential Psalms*,⁴ and perhaps the *Exposition on the Magnificat*. There also appear the *Tessaradecas* and *Ung sermon de Mammona iniquitatis*. In 1524, Coct prints the treatise *Against the Order Falsely Named of Bishops*, and the *Institution of Ministers of the Church*, and thinks of giving a French version of Luther's version of the Bible. Papillon sends his edition of the book on *Monastic Vows* to Margaret of Angoulême, and his main object was to create ties between her Court and Luther.⁵ From 1521 to 1525 all the great Lutheran writings from the *Babylonian Captivity* to *De Servo Arbitrio* have been scattered throughout the land, either in Latin or in French. Unfortunately for Papillon, Luther exhibited little intimacy with France, though he exhibited much interest in Alsace and Switzerland. In his letters from 1521 to 1530 he passes by French affairs.⁶

In Switzerland Erasmus exercised more influence than Luther. In Erasmian spirit Capito declared to Zwingli in 1521, "We cannot destroy the ancient custom."⁷ Zwingli holds that Erasmus is not "the advocate of Luther, but of the Gospel."⁸ He refuses to take part in the free-will controversy. In 1522 Erasmus has Zwingli in his society, and the following year he dedicates to him his *Spongia* against Hutten. When Carlstadt failed to make the Lutheran movement as extreme as himself, he set out for Switzerland, accomplishing there what he failed to bring about in Germany. From 1522 the gulf between the reforming party and the Erasmians begins to yawn. Bucer at Strassburg, Œcolampius at Bâle, and Zwingli at Zürich were the men to widen it.

¹ Cf. Enders, IV, Nos. 595, 602, 616 and 696.

² Hermin., I, Nos. 66 and 86; Luther to the Elector, June 20, 1526, Enders, V, No. 1079.

³ Hermin., I, No. 70; Lambert to Spalatin, June 14, 1523.

⁴ Cf. Weiss, *Notes sur les traités de Luther, traduits en français et imprimés en France*, 1887.

⁵ Hermin., I, No. 132, Dec. 28, 1524.

⁶ Imbart de la Tour, 3, 435-44. The pages of this author are illuminating, and I owe much to them.

⁷ *Epistolæ*, Egli, No. 185, Aug. 4, 1521.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Nos. 151 and 229.

The German Church, the richest in Christendom, was ill-fitted to resist the tempest which swept over it. The parochial clergy were as absurdly underpaid as the dignitaries were overpaid. The younger sons of noble and princely families might rise to the highest posts while mere boys. At the end of the second decade of the sixteenth century, the sons of princes held the following sees : Bremen, Freising, Halberstadt, Hildesheim, Magdeburg, Mayence, Merseburg, Mentz, Minden, Münster, Naumburg, Osnabrück, Paderborn, Passau, Regensburg, Spire, Verden and Verdun. The Archbishop of Bremen was also Bishop of Verden ; the Archbishop of Mayence was also Archbishop of Magdeburg and Bishop of Halberstadt ; while the Bishop of Osnabrück was obliged to content himself with the additional bishopric of Paderborn.

In the last resort Luther exalts the lay authority at the expense of the ecclesiastical. What else could he do ? To whom could he appeal save the ruling classes of his own land ? To whom did the French and English reformers appeal ? Calvin had behind him the free, vigorous communities of Swiss peasants, trained to independence by their contest with Austria. Of course Luther had behind him the strength and the intelligence of the larger German cities, but the bulk of his followers were oppressed farmers who had become savage since the peasant wars. The natural result was the immense increase in the power, not of the German State, but of the territorial States. The prince waxed great, and the Holy Roman Empire waxed correspondingly less. Luther aimed at saving Germany, yet by his actions he left no more than the shell of an Empire which crumbled to pieces at the touch of Napoleon. In the first pamphlet he attacked abuses in relation to the State. In his second he attacked abuses in relation to the Church, and in his third he discovered the individual whom these abuses had concealed. With the Church and the State reformed there was room for a man to live the good life. This principle of moral individualism comes from the German prophet, and proved one of the greatest factors in the success of his movement. Theologically it formed the essence of his message, for it was the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Tauler and the *Theologia Germanica* had begun the work which another disciple of mysticism had so ably continued. This disciple could not believe that a man became just by doing just acts. On the contrary, he came to believe that a man must first be just, and then he will do just actions. The heart must be changed : the rest will then follow. It was with a shock of

surprise that he learnt repentance meant not, as in the Vulgate translation, to do penance, but as in the Greek Testament, to change one's mind.¹ Righteousness is from within, not from without—a God-inspired life of faith, not a formal life of works. It springs directly out of the relationship of the soul to Christ, its Saviour, not out of any outward mortification. Then, like Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the bondage of sin falls from man when he sees the cross. It was this moral freedom which Luther made men realize, and it was this realization which gave the Reformation its moving impulses. No Masses or indulgences were required. No priest was to stand between the soul and God. That Luther believed in individual liberty *The Freedom of a Christian Man* proves. That he promoted princely absolutism all the after history of Europe proves. As Harnack put it, "Kant and Fichte were both of them hidden behind Luther."² That he promoted freedom of inquiry is similarly attested. For Ewald, Darwin and Kelvin trace their descent from him.

¹ Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 34, 46, 253; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 27, 344; 63, 238 f.; *Op. varii arg.*, I, 213; 2, 180; *Op. exeg.*, 14, 243.

² *Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1909, Hft. i, p. 35.

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

THE principle of authority had received rude assaults at the hands of Luther. In his denunciation of indulgences he had appealed from Tetzl to the Pope.¹ At the Diet of Augsburg he appealed from the Pope ill-informed to the Pope better-informed, and then from the Pope to a Council. Did not Councils, especially on the papal primacy, contradict one another? When the verdict of a Council was used against him he appealed to the Scriptures. When these did not support his positions, he appealed to selected passages of them. Even this was not final. In the last resort he appealed to the conscience of the individual Christian. It is remarkable that the heralds of revolt, not only in Germany, but also in France and Switzerland, are monks or priests: the day of the laymen had not yet come. The Church came to be no more than a community of Christian believers wherever they were to be found. With the people, however, the new authority he gave them was a translation of the Bible in their own speech. This he interpreted with such an infallible accent that he became the Pope of the Protestants.² When Simmas demanded "a word from God" to confirm the speeches of Socrates he expressed what all men feel. This "word from God" Luther gave his followers. The Gospel came to the peasant in the sixteenth century, and exercised over him the influence which the philo-

¹ Kalkoff, *Prozess*, 401; Paulus in the *Katholik* (1899), I, 476-80. On the indulgence question cf. the *Transactions* of the Theological Faculty of the University of Paris, 1518; Paulus, *Tetzl*, 28 ff.; Schulte, I, 63-5, 93-141, esp. 130 ff., 185; Hefele, *Ximenes*, 433 (2nd ed.); Lea, 3, 386. Tetzl said (Paulus, *Tetzl*, 149):

As soon as money in the copper rings
The soul from purgatory's fire springs.

² Luther's *Tischreden* (Kroker), No. 4. Contrast Melancthon, who reassured himself by the words inscribed to-day above the door of his study: "Si Deus pro nobis quis contra nos?" *Philipp Melancthon's letzte Lebenstage* (1910), p. 38.

sophers' doctrine of the rights of man exercised over the French peasant in the eighteenth century. It fostered those habits of critical examination of fundamental truths which constitute the very mainsprings of revolt. The Bible had been known through the medium of the Church, which constituted itself the sole interpreter thereof. It was not, therefore, the competing authority it at once became. A monopoly of salvation has always been fatal to its holders, and no less fatal to the cause of toleration. The possession of the Bible delivered the Lutherans from such a pressing danger. Their founder might claim to be infallible. His claims, however, were examined by the only bar of reason then applicable by the masses, and that was the sacred record. Once upon a time a man was forced to use faith alone, whereas now faith and reason were open to him.

Luther's attitude to the Bible was no doubt influenced by the Nominalist position, which accepted it as the supreme court of appeal in all matters of faith. Occam,¹ his master, laid down that "Holy Scriptures cannot err, the Pope can," that certitude in authority belongs only to the Divine Word.² D'Ailly held that "an affirmation of the Canonical Scripture has more authority than an assertion of the Christian Church." According to Biel the verities of the faith rested uniquely on Scriptural proofs. Jodocus Trutfetter, Luther's old professor at the University of Erfurt, heard from him, "You have been the first to teach me that we must read the canonical books with faith, all others with discernment."³ Luther, like Hooker, can tolerate whatever the Bible does not forbid: Zwingli admits only what the Bible has formally laid down.

What Luther requires is certainty. He does not fear that his doctrine is not true, for he knows that his theology "comes from heaven." Rejecting the authority of the Church, not believing, as St. Anselm did, in the power of intellect, he finds truth in the Bible and in the Bible alone. The Word of God is the supreme reason which dominates all reasons, the proof which supersedes all proofs. Certainty of faith is not in the continuity of tradition, in that long chain which unites the Church of the sixteenth century with that of the Apostolic age,

¹ On the influence of Occam cf. Kropatschek, *Occam und Luther*; Denifle-Paquier, III, p. 201; Grisar, I, ch. 4. On Melancthon's opinion of Luther's knowledge of scholasticism cf. his *Opera*, VI, 159, ed. Bretschneider.

² Cf. *Werke*, Erl. ed., 30, 107; 46, 243; 47, 38 f.; *Op. varii arg.*, I, 23, 126; 2, 36; 5, 520; *Op. exeg.*, 12, 125 f.; *Colloquia* (Bindseil), 2, 143 f.; 3, 134, 137, 151-2; *Tischreden* (F. and B.), 4, 386, 560-2; *Luther's Briefe* (De Wette), I, 40, 84 f., 107, 127; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, I, 49 ff.

³ Luther's letter to Trutfetter, May 9, 1518, *Briefwechsel*, I, No. 77, p. 187.

St. Thomas Aquinas to Bede, Bede to the Fathers, the Fathers to the Apostles. It rests completely in the unique testimony of the Scripture taken "in its simplest meaning."¹ Luther receives truths and definitions : he receives the truths because they are evangelical, and the definitions because they have texts to support them. The outcome was the removal from dogma of all the ideas grafted on to it. They may be true, they may be probable, but if they cannot find scriptural proof they have no binding value on the Christian. Of course he was compelled to sweep away all interpretations save the literal, and this forms one of his greatest merits. It is in the name of scriptural literalism that he preserved the dogma of the real presence and pronounced against the religious radicalism of Carlstadt. Clearness is a prime quality of the record of revelation. Outwardly little has altered, whereas inwardly everything has altered. The adherence to the Bible finishes the work begun by the principle of justification by faith. In the name of Christian liberty Luther overthrew the existing ecclesiastical discipline : decretals, canons, vows, celibacy and ceremonies disappear. At first the binding force of early associations, of religious emotions, forbids the proscription of every rite and remains of the past. John Calvin will come, and others will strip the Church of all treasures of "idolatry," and will leave it as bare as a Covenanting Chapel. Before the altar will stand the lectern where all may see the open Word of God. The attestation of this Word is the Holy Ghost, Who bears witness to its truth and its authority. The Bible in Luther's view does not come from the Church. History yields information on the growth of the Canon : it does no more. In the last resort the Bible attests its own inspiration. The Holy Ghost testifies to its Divine character and the absolute authority of the truth contained in it. Five times in a single page he tells us, "The Holy Spirit has written," and he believes "not a single letter has been written in vain." "The Holy Spirit is neither foolish nor drunk to utter a tittle, much less a letter, in vain."

Luther's criterion of the sacred record was, he thought, plain. "The right text," he laid down, "by which to judge its books is whether they preach Christ. Whatever does not preach Christ is not apostolic, even though it had been written by St. Peter or St. Paul. And, on the other hand, whatever does preach Christ would be apostolic even though it proceeded

¹ *De captiv. babyl.*, p. 509 : "Verbis divinis non est facienda vis . . . , sed quantum fieri potest, in simplicissima significatione servanda sunt." On this literalism cf. Barge, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, II, pp. 45, 79.

from Judas, Pilate or Herod. But this James only preaches the law and obedience to the law, and mixes the one with the other in a confusing fashion. Therefore I will not admit him in my Bible among the number of true canonical writers. But at the same time I will forbid none to place and esteem him as they please."¹ The last sentence indicates the broad-mindedness of the writer. The whole passage indicates that his condemnation of St. James's Epistle is comparative, not absolute.² Nevertheless, while Luther was unaware of it his criticism undermined the infallibility of the book which meant so much to him, assigning him a place among the beginners of doctrinal critics, though not, of course, among textual critics. He is an ancestor of F. C. Baur : he is not an ancestor of Richard Simon. He anticipates modern criticism. His anticipation, however, proceeds not from the tests of the higher critic but from his faith in Christ. Had Ritschl taught his value-judgments in 1522, the great revolutionary would have appreciated them. As he reads the Epistle to the Hebrews he is convinced that neither St. Paul nor any other Apostle wrote it.³

Johannine thought appealed far more strongly to Erasmus than to Luther. The latter is plainly puzzled by the Revelation of St. John the Divine. Still he writes, "As to this book I allow each man to form his own opinion, and will not bind down any one to my own judgment or my own ignorance, I say what I feel."⁴ The modern way in which he looked at the Bible, especially the Old Testament, continually astonishes one. To him it matters little if Moses himself did not write the five books which bear his name. It may well be, he thought, that Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea contain additions, and have reached their present forms from later writers. He has the insight to see that the book of Job is not a history, but a poem or drama.

Luther expresses his opinion freely on allegory, which, like Melanchthon and Zwingli, was only useful in attracting *boi polloi*. "Allegories and spiritual significations, when they are

¹ *Sämmtl. Werke*, 63, pp. 115, 156-8.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 63, 154, 156-7.

³ On Luther's attitude to different books of the Bible cf. Köstlin, 1², 319, 379 ; 2², 10 ff., 15, 29-30, 35-6 ; O. Scheel, *Luther's Stellung zur Heiligen Schrift* (Tübingen, 1902), 37-8, 41-45, 47-52, 55, 64 ff., 67 ff., 74 ; Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 34, 771 ff., 791 ff., 827 ff., 855-8, 867-9 ; Loofs, *Dogmengesch.*, 41, 403, 743, 745-7 ; Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengesch.* (Erl., 1898), pt. 2, 283, 288-92, and his *Grundriss der Dogmengesch.* (Leipzig, 1910), 130 ; Thimme, *Luther's Stellung zur Heiligen Schrift* (Gütersloh, 1903), 84 ff. ; Kropatscheck, *Das Schriftprinzip der lutherischen Kirche*, 1, 17 ff., 58, 76, 433, 440, 459 ; Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum*, 1², 80 ff., 668 ff., 675, 688, 716 ; O. Ritschl, *Dogmengesch. der Protestantismus*, 81, 98, 102-5.

⁴ *Sämmtl. Werke*, 63, pp. 154-5.

directed upon faith and seldom read, then they are laudable, but when they are drawn upon the life and conversation, then they are dangerous, and I am an enemy unto them. . . . St. Jerome and Origen (God forgive it them) hold thereunto that Allegories were held in such esteem. . . . Now I have shaken it off, and my best art is *Tradere Scripturam simplici sensu*, that is to deliver the Scripture in the simple sense; the same doth the deed; therein is life, strength, doctrine and art; in the other is nothing but foolishness, let it lustre and shine how it will. St. Austin gave a rule: *Quod Figura et Allegoria nihil probet sed Historia, Verba et Grammatica*, i.e. that Figure and Allegories prove nothing at all, but History, Words and Grammar."¹ It was possible to extract one plain meaning from History: it was possible to extract many obscure meanings from Figure. His method of thought demanded the removal of the allegorical school, and in removing it he performed a notable service to sound exegesis. "I have grounded my preaching," he said, "on the literal word."² As he grew he discarded any interpretation save this. "I have shaken it off," he remarked, "and my best art is to render Scripture in the simple sense." It was only so that the faithful could believe in the priesthood of all believers.

It came as a shock of surprise to the reader to note that in the Bible St. Peter made mistakes and was rebuked accordingly, thus showing little sign that either he or his successors were infallible. It was difficult to think that the extortionate Cardinals were in the line of succession from one who had neither silver nor gold. It was no less difficult to see in the New Testament the precedents for the worship of the Virgin Mary or the Saints, the celibacy of the clergy, the use of indulgences, the veneration of relics and the like. Between the purity and simplicity of the meeting at the upper room in Jerusalem and the then growing architectural and artistic beauty of St. Peter's, there was a difference sufficient to provoke inquiry.

When first announcing his plan of translating the New Testament into German, on December 21, 1521, he mentions that "our people are asking for it."³ In barely three months, with the assistance of a few helpers, he had finished the first

¹ *Table-talk*, ch. lix. I use Captain H. Bell's translation.

² *Ibid.*, ch. i.

³ On his translation cf. Döllinger, *Die Reformation*, 3, 151-73, and his *Luther, eine Skizze*, 59; Kunze, *Glaubensregel, heiligen Schrift u. Taufbekenntnis* (Leipzig, 1899), 504, 509, 521; Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 136, 145 ff., 190 ff.; Barge, *Bodenstein*, 1, 197 ff.; Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, 1^a, 199, 213 ff.; Preuss, *Die Entwicklung des Schriftprinzips*

rough drafts of the New Testament. He made the Bible a living book, for he had lived it. "Philip (Melanchthon) and I," he writes to Spalatin, who was then Court preacher, "have now begun to correct the translation of the New Testament; it will, please God, turn out a fine work. We shall need your help here and there for the choice of words; hence get ready. But send us simple words, not the language of the men-at-arms, or of the Court; the translation must above all be a homely one. May I ask you to send me at once the (German) names of the precious stones mentioned in Apocalypse xxi, or better still the stones themselves if you can get hold of them at Court or elsewhere?"¹ He asked the names of the birds from a farmer.² He was as successful in German as Tyndale was in English, for the two languages are what they are because of Luther's and Tyndale's translations. The Authorized Version of the Bible, made in 1611, had many predecessors. Tyndale, Coverdale, Rogers and Cranmer had each a share in its felicity of language. Martin Luther enjoyed no such good fortune, and his matchless translation is largely his own. Recent developments of the ideals of German Kultur find support in his translation. Did he not translate barbarian in 1 Corinthians xiv. 11 by the significant word *undeutsch*? Luther took infinite pains in noting the words in everyday use or, as he says, in "looking into the jaw of the man in the street."³ "I have," he said, "no particular, special German language, but I use the common German language so that both the Upper and the Lower Lands may understand me."⁴ His aim was to furnish the ordinary man with a translation in his own tongue. Often Luther, therefore, objected to renderings on the ground that "no German talks like that." He grumbled at the difficulty in "cramming the Hebrew writers into a German mould. They absolutely refuse to submit to the barbarism of the German tongue. It is as though a nightingale were being forced to exchange its sweet melodies for the call of the cuckoo."⁵

bei Luther bis zur Leipziger Disputation (Leipzig, 1901), 99; Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, I, 38; Wappler, *Inquisition u. Ketzerprozess*, 69; Riederer, I, 251; Denifle-Weiss, I², 610; 2, 229, 330-1. Luther's letter to Johann Lang, *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 256.

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 325. Böhmer, 150; J. Grimm, *Deutsche Grammatik*, I², p. x; O. Reichert, *Luther's Deutsche Bibel*, 6, 8, 14, 23-6, 31-2, 41, 44.

² Luther's letter to Chilian Goldstein, Apr. 7, 1522; *Corp. Reform.*, I, col. 568.

³ *Sendbrieff von Dolmetzscheñ*, Sept. 8, 1530, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 65, p. 110.

⁴ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, p. 313.

⁵ *Briefwechsel*, 6, p. 291, June 14, 1528. Cf. his *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 123, 128, 169 f., 176 f., 195, 197, 263, 339; 2, 90, 115 f., 170, 254, 263; 6, 489; *Colloquia* (Bindseil), I, 261, 378; 2, 212 ff.; 3, 197 ff.; *Werke*, Erl.

The translation, then, was popular, not scientific. That it completely achieved its object, the after-history of Germany proves. On September 21, 1522, the New Testament appeared with a frontispiece and a number of woodcuts by Lucas Cranach; the title-page bore the words, "Das Newe Testament Deutzsch. Vittenberg." Neither the year nor the printer's name was given. Luther received no fee for his great translation any more than for his other writings. His fee was the knowledge that his countrymen were for the first time, on a large scale at any rate, able to read the glad tidings of Christ in their own language. What Erasmus had accomplished for the Greek text Luther accomplished for the German: the one was rendered accessible to the scholar, the other was rendered accessible to the people. The first edition of the German New Testament was in such demand that a new and amended edition appeared in December. New editions were published in Wittenberg in 1526 and 1530. In this town alone sixteen editions were printed before 1557, while there were more than fifty reprints in the rest of Germany. From 1523 to 1524 the Old Testament also appeared. It is not a little remarkable that at the very moment Luther was giving his version of the New Testament to Germany, Lefèvre d'Étaples was giving his less popular one to France.

From 1530 to 1540 there were 34 Wittenberg editions and 72 reprints in other parts of Germany, and from 1541 to 1546 there were 18 Wittenberg editions and 26 reprints.¹ From 1534 to 1584 no less than 100,000 complete Bibles left the press at Wittenberg. Eighty-four original editions and 253 reprints appeared in the translator's lifetime. It is, therefore, the truth to say that Germany was flooded with the Bible. Cochleus testifies that even shoemakers and women became so absorbed in its study as to be able in a short time to carry on discussions with doctors in theology. For the one reader of the sacred record before this translation there were fifty after it.

Books had been published in tall and heavy folios, chained on the shelves of a library. Now they are octavo or half-octavo, small and light, moving freely from house to house. The weaver as he regulated his shuttle could take the translation down and read it in a spare moment. A book was no longer a stranger: it was a family friend. The reactionary

ed., 42, 86; 65, 37, 104-II, 254 ff.; *Tischreden* (Bindseil), 4, 569, 571; *Op. varii arg.*, 4, 456. On Melancthon's part cf. *Corp. Reform.*, I, 563, 565, 567, 570-6, 599.

¹ Cf. Paul Pietsch's estimate in *Werke*, Weim. ed., Deutsche Bibel, p. 2.

party were afraid of this, and edicts against Luther's translation of the Bible appeared in Austria, Bavaria, Saxony, and Brandenburg. Duke George of Saxony on November 7, 1522, ordered that before Christmas all copies in circulation must be given up to the magistrate. The Theological Faculty of Leipzig, in a letter of January 23, 1523, endeavoured to enforce this decree against the reformer's glossaries and prefaces, even if they were accurate. Jerome Emser, the Duke's Court chaplain, in a pamphlet supported this attitude, assigning as his reasons the wrong rendering of some passages and the notes appended to others. At the same time he acknowledged the need the new book supplied when he recommended the bishops to commission learned men to prepare an exact translation.

Luther was determined to probe his beliefs by Scripture. Characteristically enough, his statue at Worms represents him as armed only with the Bible. It is easy to multiply quotations from his writings on this point; and it is only by a number of quotations that it is possible to understand how important the new translation was to his position. "Neither Church, nor Fathers, nor Apostles, nor Angels are to be listened to except so far as they teach the pure Word of God," so he teaches in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, a book beloved by John Bunyan.¹ "Any believer who has better grounds," he affirms, "and authority from Scripture on his side is more to be believed than the Pope or a whole Council."² Indeed, "without Scripture faith soon goes."³ "Whatever is advanced without being attested by Scripture or a revelation need not be believed."⁴ "To this wine no water must be added"⁵; "to this sun no lantern must be held up."⁶ "You must take your stand on a plain, clear, strong word of Scripture which will then be your support."⁷ Such opinions just as surely undermined the authority of the Church as his theory of the priesthood of the believer undermined its sacerdotalism. Wyclif's chief bequest to posterity was his English Bible, and the most substantial of Luther's legacies was his German Bible. It made his work immediately acceptable, and ensured its permanence. There are dangers in the individualistic position. "Formerly the people were not so much afraid. The reason is

¹ *Com. in Ep. ad Galatas*, I, p. 104.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 404.

³ *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 15², p. 145 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 508; Erl. ed., 5, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 141; Erl. ed., 27, p. 323.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 235; Erl. ed., 35, p. 132.

⁷ Luther's letter to Wenceslaus Link, Oct. 26, 1539, *Briefe*, 5, p. 219.

this. In popery we trusted in the merits of the monks and others, but now each one had to trust to and depend on himself.”¹

As Luther was clever enough to give his doctrines the shield of national feelings, he did not experience serious difficulty in attacking authority, the authority of Rome. The destructive work was comparatively easy. The question was, Could he construct? Could he attain a statesmanlike grasp of the situation? Plainly the Bible—or rather his interpretation of it—must be able to give him clearly defined dogma, a firmly built organization, which was obliged to rely on the support of the prince. In his task his followers discerned that if they had got rid of the Pope of Rome the Pope of Wittenberg was occupying the vacant position. The Bible possessed fresh authority, but the duty of explaining it lay with the new Pope. The Christian man possessed liberty—to the degree Luther allowed him. Faith was necessary, but it was faith as the new theologian expounded it.

Early in his career, in his examination at Augsburg, he gave the Bible the first rank among theological sources, adding that it was certainly being corrupted by the so-called decrees of the Church.¹ In his appeal to the Council he reckons the Bible above the Pope, and he admits the authority of the Council side by side with that of the inspired record. At the Leipzig Disputation he ranks Holy Scripture above any Council, and declares that Œcumenical Councils have already erred in matters of faith.² Shortly after this Disputation he and Carlstadt inform the Elector that “a layman with the Scripture on his side is more to be believed in than the Pope and Council without Scripture.”³ Luther maintains that the Bible may be interpreted by any one, even by the “humble miller’s maid, nay, by a child of nine if it has faith.”⁴ “The sheep must judge whether the pastors teach in Christ’s own tone.”⁵ He also held that whatever is not against Scripture is for Scripture. Unlike the Puritans and Ulrich Zwingli, and therefore like Richard Hooker, he did not condemn ceremonies to which the people were accustomed simply because they were not mentioned in the Bible. If they fostered piety, and if they were not condemned by the Word of God, they were profitable to

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 18 ff.; Erl. ed., 2, p. 385 ff.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 2, p. 288; Erl. ed., 2, p. 75.

³ Letter of Aug. 18, 1519, *Briefe*, 1, p. 315; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 19; *Briefwechsel*, 2, p. 12.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 3, p. 359; Erl. ed., 16², p. 446.

⁵ *Ibid.* Weim. ed., 11, p. 409; Erl. ed., 22, p. 143.

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the faithful. He was quite willing, for example, to tolerate the presence of the altar and the candles thereon, though he was utterly opposed to the Mass.

In 1522 Luther tells Henry VIII that "against all the sayings of the Fathers, against all the arts and words of the angels, men, and devils, I set the Scriptures and the Gospel. . . . Here I take my stand, and here I defy them. . . . The Word of God I count above all else, and the Divine Majesty supports me ; hence I should not turn a hair were a thousand Augustines against me, and am certain that the true Church adheres with me to God's Word." "Here Harry of England must hold his tongue." The King would now see how Luther "stood upon his rock," and surveyed Henry VIII "twaddling" like "a silly fool."¹ "Each man must believe solely because it is the Word of God, and because he feels within him that it is true, even though an angel from heaven and all the world should preach against it."² The appeal to the people was made all the easier because Luther discarded all reference to the old literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical sense, and in his account of the offenders against the eighth commandment he classifies the foolish and inane dreamers who play with such senses. The words can have no other meaning except the simplest. Of course, this removed the necessity for all acquaintance with artificial rules of exegesis or with practice in mystical speculation. The individual, employing his faculties, might interpret the sacred record as his intelligence allowed him.

Troubles arose when others appealed to this tribunal and refused to accept his decision. In a sermon of 1528 he admits that there is no heretic who does not appeal to the Scriptures ; hence it came about that people called the Bible a heresy-book.³ As Glapion put it, the Bible was a book like soft wax which every man could twist and stretch according to his own pleasure. Two days before his death, in 1546, Luther wrote in Latin : "No one can understand the *Bucolics* of Virgil who has not been a herdsman for five years ; nor his *Georgics* unless he has laboured for five years in the fields. In order to understand aright the epistles of Cicero a man must have been full twenty years in the public service of a great state. No one need fancy he has tasted Holy Scriptures who has not ruled Churches for a

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 256 ff. ; Erl. ed., 28, p. 379 ff.

² *Von Menschen lernen tzu meyden* (1522), *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 90 ; Erl. ed., 28, p. 340.

³ Sermon of Aug. 2, 1528, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 27, p. 287.

hundred years with prophets like Elijah and Elisha, with John the Baptist, Christ, and the Apostles.”¹ In 1546 many difficulties obscure in 1521 had received illumination, for Luther possessed a mind which grew with the course of the varying problems confronting it.

Luther condemns the authority of the Church just as much as Francis Bacon condemns the authority of the Schoolmen. The former stood between man and God while the latter stood between man and nature. The more closely man approaches God, the better for religion: the more closely man approaches nature, the better for science. The rôle of the prophet is the rôle of each. From the Pope the reformer turned to the Bible on which papal authority rested. From the folios of the Schoolmen the philosopher turned to the phenomena of the earth which the scholastic theory was supposed to record. Bacon was as willing as Luther to obey his maxim, “Da Fidei quæ Fidei sunt,” and he was more willing than Luther to obey the complementary maxim, “Da Scientiæ quæ Scientiæ sunt.” Neither could possibly accept the view that “Ita scriptum est” was final: what man had written man must bring to the test of fact. Their limitations were similar, for Luther neglected the classics as impartially as Bacon neglected mathematics. They were agreed in rejecting *idola fori*. Both believed that the receptive attitude to truth—the passive attitude, if you will—was the correct one. “Into the kingdom of man, which is based on science, as into the kingdom of Heaven, we can only enter *sub persona infantis*.” The mind to both men was to be a *tabula rasa* so far as preconceived notions or idols were concerned. Luther and Bacon manifested a singular freedom from the domain of appearance: reality was the one thing that mattered to them. Outwardly at least the will of man seems to be free, but when Luther penetrated inwardly he perceived that such freedom was a delusion. The point is not whether his view was right or wrong: the point is that he was seeking the reality behind phenomena. The surrender of the will to God implied to him the power to employ the will on behalf of God, just as the surrender of reason to the compelling power of phenomena was to Bacon in reality the discovery of reason. Neither thinker realized the implications of this surrender, and consequently was unable to set forth his conception in a way that appealed forcibly to the understanding. They felt its attraction intensely. They could communicate this intensity of feeling: they could not communicate its intellectual

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 57, p. 16. Cf. his *Table-talk*.

foundation. The outcome of their labour they naturally could not see: Moses is not the only leader to ascend Mount Pisgah. The growth of toleration is as much the work of the one as the growth of science is the work of the other. The reality of the ideas of the two men, their worth and their influence, are manifest to all. The "Souveraineté du but" is the test by which life stands or falls, and tried by that test Luther and Bacon stand erect.

The friend of Cranach and Dürer could not be void of feeling for the æsthetic side of life. There were iconoclastic excesses in the French and the English Reformations: there were none in the German, thanks to Luther. He loved nature, and, unlike Erasmus, wrote enthusiastically on the sweet song of the birds.¹ The humanist, however, was as devoted to music as the reformer. In the beauty of the earth he perceived the same message God had written in the records He had given to the sons of men. The reading of the Bible and the preaching of the sermon drove home to the hearts of the people the new message: so too did the new hymns they sang. Luther realized as deeply as Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun² that the ballads of a country were more important than its laws. The whole nation sang itself into Lutheran doctrine. According to Herder "Germany was reformed by songs."³ Hans Sachs saluted Luther as the nightingale of Wittenberg. The reformer well knew the power of such fine old hymns as "He who broke the might of Hell," and "Jesus Christ to-day is risen." He resolved that his genius should take a new flight, and he composed thirty-seven hymns. Next to theology, he valued the appreciation of music and song as the very gift of God.⁴ Among his best efforts are, "Ah God, look down from heaven and see," "Out of the depths I cry to Thee," "From highest heaven on joyous wing," "Dear is to me the Holy Maid" (i.e. the Church), and, above all, "A sure stronghold our God is He."⁵ The last was as fortunate in its melody as in its words. The straying student and the wandering pedlar carried these hymns over the length and breadth of Germany. They were sung by the

¹ Enders, VII, Nos. 1624-5, April 23, 1530.

² *An Account of a Conversation concerning a Right to Regulation of Governments* (1703): "I knew a very nice man . . . that believed if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."

³ *Kalligone*, Part II, iv.

⁴ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, p. 311.

⁵ Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 167; Köstlin-Kawerau, 536-43, 587; Wackernagel, *Das deutsche Kirchenlied von der ältesten Zeit bis zum 17. Jahr.*, 3, 26, 30-1.

children at school, by the peasant at the plough, by the weaver at the loom, and they were the last words breathed by the dying man.

Three of Luther's best-known hymns are taken from the Psalms, above all the forty-sixth, which is imperishably associated with his name. The forty-sixth was the Psalm with which Vincent of Lerins solaced himself in his old age. It was the Psalm that renewed the courage of Demetrius the Don when he defeated the Tartar hordes in 1380. It was the Psalm Luther sang when he felt the strength of the forces arrayed against him, notably during the preparations for the Diet of Augsburg, when he composed his memorable version, *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*. It was the Psalm Gustavus Adolphus asked his army to sing on the eve of the Battle of Leipzig, 1631. It was the Psalm Cromwell expounded to the members of his second Parliament when he realized some of the difficulties in the way of accomplishing God's will on earth. It was the Psalm the Parliament sang at the thanksgiving service in Greyfriars Church when their army triumphed on the field of Naseby, and it was the Psalm chosen as her epitaph by that staunch cavalier, Blanche Lady Arundel. It was the favourite Psalm of the Huguenot of France and the Covenanter of Scotland. It was the Psalm which expressed the feelings of the Protestants of Linz when they were sent into exile to Transylvania before Joseph II signed the Edict of Toleration, 1781. It was the Psalm to which Havelock turned when he understood his danger in 1842. It was the Psalm sung by the revolutionists of Paris and Berlin in 1848.

The forty-sixth Psalm is what Heine called it, the "Marseillaise Hymn of the Reformation": nevertheless, it differs as profoundly from the "Marseillaise" as the German Reformation from the French. As Hausrath put it, "the trumpets of Gustavus Adolphus and the cannon of Lützen are audible in it."¹ It reminds us of Torstenson and Coligny, of Cromwell and William of Orange. Frederick the Great characteristically christened it "God Almighty's Grenadier March." Here is Carlyle's noble rendering:

A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That hath us now o'ertaken.
The ancient Prince of Hell
Hath risen with purpose fell;

¹ Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 155, 158; Nelle, *Geschichte des deutschen ev. Kirchenliedes*, 24; Spitta, *Ein' feste Burg*, 372; Wackernagel, 3, 20.

Strong mail of craft and power
He weareth in this hour ;
On earth is not his fellow.

With force of arms we nothing can,
Full soon were we down-ridden.
But for us fights the proper Man
Whom God Himself hath bidden.
Ask ye, Who is this same ?
Christ Jesus is His name,
The Lord Sabaoth's Son,
He and no other one
Shall conquer in the battle.

And were this world all devils o'er
And watching to devour us,
We lay it not to heart so sore ;
Not they can overpower us.
And let the Prince of Ill
Look grim as e'er he will,
He harms us not a whit,
For why ? His doom is writ ;
A word shall quickly slay him.

God's Word, for all their craft and force,
One moment shall not linger,
But, spite of Hell, shall have its course,
'Tis written by His finger.
And though they take our life,
Goods, honour, children, wife,
Yet is their profit small ;
These things shall vanish all,
The City of God remaineth.

Luther's hymns consoled men in life ; they inspired them at the moment of death. In memory of the two martyrs at Brussels in 1523 he composed his triumphal song, *Ein neues Lied wir heben an* ; its tenth verse laid hold on men :

Their ashes will not rest and lie
But scattered far and near,
Stream, dungeon, bolt, and grave defy,
Their foeman's shame and fear.
Those whom alive the tyrant's wrongs
To silence could subdue,
He must, when dead, let sing the songs
And in all languages and tongues
Resound the wide world through.

Charles V possessed resolution and force of character,¹ and with these gifts he combined permanence and persistence in his policy : all these qualities had been denied to his showy

¹ There are three portraits of the Emperor by Titian: one is at the Alto Pinakothek, Munich, but it has been repainted probably by Rubens; there is the equestrian portrait of Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg, which is now a wreck; and there is the magnificent full length of the Emperor with a dog, now in the Prado, Madrid. There is a portrait by Rubens in

rival, Francis I. The eldest child of Philip of Burgundy and Jeanne of Spain, the longer the Emperor lived the more the blood of his mother asserted itself. The Venetian ambassador, Marino Cavalli, points out that the Emperor was pleasing to the Flemings and Burgundians by his goodwill and familiarity, to the Italians by his sagacity and discretion, to the Spaniards by the splendour of his glory and by his severity. The Germans he understood as little as the Stuarts understood the English. His early motto was *Nondum*, and in spite of the fact that he exchanged it for *Plus ultra*, it was the motto that justly characterizes his policy towards the Lutherans. The troubles with Suleiman I or with Francis I, with Leo X or with Clement VII, rendered the proper time for solving his religious difficulties "not yet."

Charles V was at his best in middle life, Francis I in early life. Resources, abilities, and statesmanship had been bestowed upon both sovereigns. Francis dissipated his resources, wasted his abilities, and his statesmanship degenerated into cunning, whereas Charles made some effort to develop his resources, to improve his abilities, and to broaden his statesmanship. Both were persecutors, but here Charles was sincere. The latter persecuted men in the Netherlands and in Spain. In Germany he was tolerant because it suited his policy. He employed neither the rack nor the screw simply because he dare not. His position was insecure, and he had no mind to make it untenable. Moreover, a policy of toleration was certain to divide the princes who adhered to the Lutheran faith. *Divide et impera* was another of his mottoes. Like Francis, he proved no friend to constitutional liberty. He weakened the Diet in Germany and he ruined the Cortes in Spain. "Heresy is encouraging ideas of liberty," he wrote to his daughter a few months before his death.¹ How could he allow political freedom when he was resolved to put down religious? For the presence of the freedom to serve God as conscience directs carries with it freedom to serve the State.

Ardent and ambitious, Francis I lived to enjoy the pleasures of kingship: he shrank from its pains and perils. The consti-

the Vienna Academy, and another of the capture of Tunis by Charles V, painted by Rubens, in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum, Berlin. Mr. C. Morrison owns a panel showing Charles V receiving a deputation from the town of Antwerp.

¹ *Dossier de Yuste*, May 3, 1558. Cf. the speech of the Duke of Alva, July 30, 1562, *Foreign State Papers*; the Emperor's letter to his daughter Joanna, May 3, 1558, and, above all, his will; cf. also Gachard, 2, 461; Ranke, 5, 308.

tutional life of France he crushed: in his reign of thirty-two years the States-General never met. Henry VIII was a despot under the form of law, whereas Francis I was a despot without the form of law. His mother and his sister adored him, and their adoration, especially his mother's, allowed his weaker qualities to unfold themselves. Restless in body, he was as restless in mind as Leo X. His brilliant bearing in tournament and his increasing belief in himself were qualities which imposed upon his world. Bayard regarded him as "a fair prince, if ever there was one in the world,"¹ yet the canvas of Paul Veronese reveals him as the sensualist he really was.² Chivalrous he seemed to be, but in his attitude to women his coarseness was at least as evident as his courtesy.

Military glory, the lust of conquest—these attracted the King as the magnet attracts the iron-filings. His reign, however, has only two victories to show, Marignano at its opening and Cerisoles at its close. His foreign policy was inevitably expensive. When its bills had to be paid retrenchment was the order of the day except the King's *menus plaisirs*; these remained uncurtailed. His predecessors had subordinated everything to the welfare of France: he subordinated everything to the welfare of himself. By the Treaty of Madrid he sacrificed France, and by the Treaty of Cambrai he sacrificed Italy. Italy took her revenge. She lured the King from his true policy in the north to his false policy in the south. Francis grasped at the shadow and lost the substance.

It was the fashion for the prince to patronize learning, and accordingly the King was such a patron. The Renaissance in the north was taking a Christian form, but this aspect made little appeal to the most Christian King. The greatness of truth, its growth and its deepening apprehension—these were matters outside him. In a natural sense the love of beauty is the love of truth; in an unnatural sense it is possible to separate them, and in this sense Francis loved beauty, external form.

The French King might have been the William III to his Louis XIV, the Holy Roman Emperor: instead of occupying this proud position he was merely a sham Edward III of England, an ignoble Henry IV of France. Charles was a statesman: Francis was an intriguer like Elizabeth, but an intriguer devoid of her insight into the problems of the present and her foresight into the problems of the future. The Emperor

¹ *Mémoires du Chevalier Bayard*, Coll. Univ., xv, p. 363.

² Cf. the portrait in the Louvre painted by Titian, c. 1536-9.

possessed some grasp of the complex relations which the age of the Reformation ushered in, whereas the King possessed none save the most superficial. To the latter the reformers were simply pawns in the game which he was playing against his rival. Francis, though he never knew it, was the champion of liberty against the overgrown power of Charles: he was the friend of freedom and of reform. All unconscious of his high destiny, he served the cause of toleration. Such is the irony of history. On the other hand, though he was the ally of humanism and the enemy of scholasticism, yet he championed the latter at the expense of the former. He favoured the expression of reformed theology abroad and its suppression at home. Luther naturally felt confidence in his mission when such a powerful ally lent him support, however fitful.

Leo X witnessed this confidence of the reformer in his Divine mission with as much dismay as his easy-going nature permitted. He had excommunicated the heretic in 1520. Now he pressed Charles V, whose candidature for the Imperial throne he had supported, to carry the Bull of excommunication into practical effect. He reminded the Emperor that he would be bearing the sword in vain if he proved less willing to use it against heretics than against infidels, for heretics were worse than infidels. Luther had, however, been condemned unheard. Erasmus and the Elector of Saxony advised the bringing of the case before the arbitrament of learned men.¹ Charles V refused to sign the edict for giving effect to the Bull until he heard the defence the innovator might offer. Accordingly he summoned the Diet to meet at Worms in January 1521. The Emperor was born with a mind holding firmly a binding connexion with the past. With Louis XIV he knew that "l'hérétique est celui qui a une opinion," and that "l'hérésie est . . . fatale à la royauté et à toute autorité légitime." Though he was a Fleming by birth, all his being became Spanish, and he was not influenced by German feeling, by German interest or by German princes. Luther, on the other hand, was nothing if he was not a German to the core, and the strength of his position lay in the fact that he had behind him not only many German rulers, but also the heart of the German people.²

¹ Kalkoff, *Die Vermittelungspolitik des Erasmus und seine Anteil an den Flugschriften der ersten Reformationszeit*, I, p. 1 ff., and his remarks in *Zeitschrift für Geschichte des Oberrheins*, XXI, 267; *Repertorium für Kunstwissens.*, XXVII, 358 ff.; *Reichstagsakten*, II, pp. 466-8.

² H. Meltzer, *Luther als deutscher Mann* (Tübingen, 1905), 56; Scheel's review of Meltzer's book in *Deutsche Literaturztg.*, 1905, No. 10; Döllinger, *Luther, eine Skizze*, 57; his *Kirche u. Kirchen*, 10, 386 ff.; and his *Vorträge*

An Indian Civil Servant must regulate his watch simultaneously by the longitudes of Delhi and London. The Emperor had a far more difficult task, for he had to regulate his watch simultaneously by the longitudes of Augsburg and Rotterdam, of Rome and Madrid. Not a little of the success of the Lutheran movement was due to this difference in longitude.

The following itinerary of the Emperor illustrates the difficulties occasioned by his many and conflicting interests :

1519. Saragossa, Barcelona.
1520. Barcelona, Dover, Canterbury, Brussels, Bruges, Louvain, Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne.
1521. Worms, Aix-la-Chapelle, Aerschot, Brussels, Mons, Oudenarde.
1522. Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, Dunkirk, Rochester, Greenwich, London, Windsor, Winchester, Toledo, Tordesillas, Valladolid.
1523. Valladolid, Burgos, Pampeluna.
1524. Pampeluna, Valladolid, Madrid.
1525. Madrid, Toledo, Aranjuez.
1526. Toledo, Seville, Granada.
1527. Valladolid, Burgos.
1528. Madrid, Toledo.
1529. Toledo, Barcelona, Boulogne.
1530. Bologna, Innsbruck, Roveredo, Innsbruck, Munich, Augsburg, Mayence, Bonn, Spires, Cologne.
1531. Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle, Brussels, Louvain, Ghent.
1532. Brussels, Louvain, Cologne, Stuttgart, Ratisbon, Straubingen, Osterhoven, Passau.
1533. Bologna, Marseilles, Barcelona.
1534. Madrid, Toledo.
1535. Alcala, Saragossa, Majorca, Minorca, Sicily, Naples.
1536. Naples, Rome, Siena, Asti.
1537. Valladolid.
1538. Barcelona, Esterlik, Villa Franca, Nice, Genoa.
1539. Toledo, Madrid, Bayonne, Bordeaux.
1540. Madrid, Ghent, Antwerp, Louvain, Amsterdam.
1541. Luxemburg, Metz, Worms, Spires, Ratisbon, Straubingen, Munich, Botzen, Lucca, Genoa.
1542. Madrid, Valladolid.
1543. Madrid, Marseilles, Genoa, Cremona, Roveredo, Spires, Bonn, Worms, Mons.

über die Wiedervereinigung der chr. Kirchen, 53 ff. ; J. Wieser in *Zeitschrift für kath. Theologie*, 8 (1884), 143 f., 156.

1544. Liège, Aix-la-Chapelle, Worms, Nassau, St. Quentin, Mons, Brussels.
 1545. Diest, Worms, Cologne, Bonn.
 1546. Utrecht, Luxemburg, Bonn, Spire, Ratisbon, Neuburg, Heilbronn.

That is, Charles was in Germany from October 1520 to June 1521; from June 1530 to January 1531; from January to October 1532; from January to August 1541; from July 18 to August 5, 1543; from January to July 1544; from May to August 1545, and from March to December 1546.¹

This itinerary convinces one how much the Reformation owed to circumstance, above all the circumstance that the Emperor was so Spanish at heart.² It would be a hopeless task to convince a Spaniard that his country is in the debt of Martin Luther for the independence of her crown, that he preserved her from being an appendage of the Empire: nevertheless, it is a fact. Charles practically left the Netherlands a nation.

The Emperor was hampered in his career by his devotion to Spain, by the Lutheran rising, by the contest with France, and by the contest with Turkey. These movements obliged him to scatter his forces when he ought to have concentrated them on the religious revolt. They forced him to temporize with Luther until it was too late for effective action. It is hard to speak in moderate terms of the results of the invasion of Central Europe by the vast armies of Suleiman the Magnificent. It was no empty boast of the Ottoman Sultan that he was master of many kingdoms, the ruler of three continents, and the lord of two seas. In the sixteenth century it is no exaggeration to speak of the Mediterranean as a Turkish lake. The Mohammedan proved a most staunch ally of Luther: the alliance was not a formal one though of its reality there can be no doubt. The survival of Lutheranism was in a measure due to the Turk.

Of all the enemies of Charles V, the most bitter was Francis I of France. He proved a continual obstacle in the path of the Emperor. The victory of Marignano, 1515, made the French king arbiter of Europe. While he was celebrating it his rival

¹ M. Gachard, *Voyages des Souverains des Pays-Bas*, vol. ii, Bruxelles, 1874; W. Bradford, *The Itinerary of Charles V, being a translation from the original of his Flemish private secretary*, Vandeness, London, 1850. Cf. also M. de Foronda, *Estancias y viajes de Carlos V desde el dia de su nacimiento hasta el de su muerte*, which informs us where the Emperor was on every day of his life.

² Armstrong, *Charles V*, II, 307 ff.

was consolidating his forces. The crowns of Castile and Aragon, of Burgundy and Austria, and the Imperial sceptre rested on the head of Charles. Francis was clamped in a vice, as it were, by Charles. On the north there were the Low Countries, on the south there was Spain, and on the east there were Germany and Franche-Comté. What more natural than that he should seek an outlet through the plains of Lombardy? Milan surely was his possession by every right of nature. The campaigns of Bonnivet, of Lautrec, and of the King himself, resulted in the crushing defeat at Pavia, 1525. From that fatal day to the end of his reign in 1547 Francis is planning and plotting alliances in order to recover his position and his prestige. He is the ally of the Protestants of Germany and the Catholics of Italy, he is the confederate of the Pope and of the Sultan, and he is obliged to extend a friendly hand to the schismatic king of England, Henry VIII. Catholics, Protestants, and Mohammedans are all the same to him—if they will but aid him in his attack on the Holy Roman Emperor. The Most Christian King is eager to secure an alliance with the believer in the Koran. Obviously, there is no common bond between these diverse allies. The one point always standing out in the policy of Francis is his unalterable decision to secure the succession of the Visconti: Milan is his great aim throughout. In the rivalry between Francis and Charles the prize of the contest is, not the Imperial crown, which fell to the King of Spain before the outbreak of the crisis, but the fertile plains of Lombardy. To conquer the Milanese in 1515 at the battle of Marignano, to lose it in 1522 at Bicocque, to try to retake it in 1525 at the battle of Pavia, to lose it once more—this is the history of the first part of the reign of Francis. From the origins of the Reformation to the Revolution—except during the Seven Years' War—the policy of France, in spite of its attachment to Catholicism, consists in sustaining the Protestant princes of Germany against the Emperor. It is at the bottom of the rivalry between France and Austria. Francis I commenced it by encouraging the League of Schmalkald: Henry II followed his example.

Such were the complications Charles had to face when the Pope besought him, January 18, 1521, to publish the Bull of excommunication throughout Germany. Let the Emperor, it pointed out, remember the example of the earlier Emperors,¹ who had constantly fought against heresy. Let

¹ Constantine, Charlemagne, and Otto are among the emperors referred to in Leo's letter, Feb. 25, 1521, to Charles V, Balan, n. 26.

him bear in mind how God had blessed him, young as he was, and had entrusted to him the sword of the greatest power in the world. He wore it in vain if he did not employ it against infidels and heretics.¹ Letters written in this strain were sent to the Imperial confessor, Glapion, and to certain princes.² In State papers of February 1 and 6, 1521, directed to Aleander by Cardinal Medici, Aleander was ordered to point out clearly to Charles that the new movement concerned the State at least as much as the Church, for the innovators were as intent upon the overthrow of secular authority as of ecclesiastical. No doubt the Pope had personal interests in the matter, but so too had the Emperor, and indeed every prince in his dominions.³ The very day on which Charles V signed the summoning of Luther to the Diet of Worms Magellan saw the land of India, thus completing the work of Vasco da Gama and Christopher Columbus.

The Diet met at Worms, January 1521. At the Council of Constance, 1416, Poggio watched with the utmost detachment Jerome of Prague recant his recantation. He contemplated Jerome as a man who is displaying heroic fortitude, and thus describes him to Leonardo Bruni: "There he stood undismayed, unfaltering, not merely indifferent to death, but ready to welcome it—another Cato." Once more the same spectacle was witnessed, for the courage of Martin Luther was closely akin to that of Jerome of Prague. According to his friend Myconius, when warned that he would be burnt to ashes by the cardinals and bishops at Worms, and reminded of the fate of Hus at Constance, he replied, "Even if they kindled a fire as high as heaven from Wittenberg to Worms, I would appear in the name of the Lord, in obedience to the imperial summons, and would walk into Behemoth's mouth, between his great teeth, and confess Christ." To his friend and biographer, Ratzeberger, who uttered a similar prophecy, he retorted, "Nettles wouldn't be so bad, one could stand them, but to be burned with fire, yes, that would be too hot." In Frankfort he wrote to Spalatin, who was at Worms with the Elector, in another mood: "We are coming, my Spalatin, although Satan has tried to stop me with more than one sickness. The whole way from Eisenach here I have been miserable and am still in a way not before experienced. Charles's mandate I know has been published to frighten me. But Christ lives and we will enter Worms in

¹ Sadoleti, *Epist.*, 94 ff.; Balan, n. 13, n. 26; Reich., II, 495, n. 1; Bergenroth, II, n. 324; Förstemann, *Neues Urkundenbuch*, 27-9.

² Cf. Balan, n. 27; Sadoleti, *Epist.*, 101 ff.

³ Balan, *Mon. ref.*, n. 17-8.

spite of all the gates of hell and powers of the air." The Waldenses had perished: the Albigenses had also perished. Wyclif had spoken in vain. Hus had died in vain. Were the prospects of success greater in 1521? When the peasant's son stood for the first and last time in the presence of the successor of Cæsar the future of toleration was at stake. Evolution had failed to provide a remedy, and Luther was convinced that revolution must be tried. In one sense, he stood alone as he faced the members of the Diet.¹ In another sense, he did nothing of the kind, for had he been simply a poor monk neither Emperor nor Diet would have wasted as much time over him as the Council of Constance wasted over Jerome of Prague and John Hus. Behind him stood influential counsellors, and they were every whit as much on their trial as the prophet himself. According to Aleander, nine-tenths of the people were adherents of Luther, while the remainder held the Roman court in deadly hatred.² He stoutly defended the teaching of his books and steadfastly refused to recant. Johann Eck,³ Official of Treves, demanded a plain reply: "Luther, you have not answered to the point. You ought not to call in question what has been decided and condemned by Councils. Therefore I beg of you to give a simple unsophisticated answer without horns. Will you recant or not?" Clear was the reply, constituting both an attack on authority and a defence of reason: "Since your Majesty and your Lordships ask for a plain answer, I will give you one without horns or teeth. Unless I am convicted by Scripture or right reason—for I trust neither in popes nor councils, since they have often erred and contradicted themselves—unless I am thus convinced, I am bound by the texts of the Bible, my conscience is captive to the Word of God, I neither can nor will recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to act against conscience. God help me. Amen."⁴ The Spaniards in the audience groaned and hissed this reply, the Germans greeted it with applause. "Here I stand," he resolutely maintained, "(I cannot do otherwise). God help me. Amen." He had borne noble testimony at the Diet of Worms, and his testimony constitutes a landmark in the revolt against authority on April 18, 1521. One hundred and eleven years later a scientist was required to witness

¹ On the doings of the Diet cf. Balan, 72; Brieger, 70; Friedrich, 105; Förstemann, I, 57-8; Steitz, 56-7.

² Report of Feb. 8, 1521, Balan, n. 36.

³ He is not the controversialist.

⁴ Balan, n. 67, 70; Brieger, n. 23-4. Cf. Paquier, 242 ff., 256; Kalkoff, *Aleander*, 169 ff.; *Reichstagsakten*, II, 452.

on behalf of the truth. The sayings "Hier steh' ich (Ich kann nicht anders). Gott helfe mir. Amen," and "E pur si muove" measure the distance between Luther and Galileo. On reaching his lodgings Luther gleefully exclaimed, "I am through! I am through!" Progress seldom took a longer step forward than that wonderful April day. Luther vindicated the liberty of a Christian man and he vindicated the freedom of his conscience.

His answer was enough for Charles V. How could authority be preserved if the people believed that the Pope and the Councils made mistakes? The Emperor said that the effects of such doctrine were treasonable.¹ Luther left Worms April 26, 1521, and in May Aleander² persuaded the Emperor to sign the document which placed the excommunicated man under the ban of the Empire, that is, made him an outlaw, with the command that all his writings be destroyed.³ The edict declared that he disseminated evil fruits: that he violated the number, rite, and use of the sacraments; and that he uttered shameful calumnies against the Pope, despised the priesthood, and incited the laity to wash their hands in the blood of the priests. He taught that man had no free will, and encouraged a life without law, as he had proved by destroying all its hallowed safeguards, and burned the books of canon law. He threw contempt on all Councils, especially that of Constance, which had restored peace and unity to the German nation.

Not only was Luther threatened with destruction, but so were all his sympathizers. In effect, the Emperor proclaimed a new Albigenian war. His proclamation was little better than waste paper. His victory was Pyrrhic. The breakdown of the ecclesiastical machinery of coercion in Luther's cause, resulting from his protest by the Elector of Saxony, facilitated the free expression of thought. Instinctively the reformer felt this when he burnt not only the Bull but the books containing the canon law. Men spoke of the Holy Roman Empire, though even in 1520 Voltaire's gibe was justified, for it was neither an empire, nor Roman, nor holy. At best it was German. The power of the Emperor was in practice no more than that of one who was the first of the electoral princes, though in theory he

¹ Förstemann, I, 25.

² Brieger, 16 ff., 61, 118, 143, 147; Friedrich, 23, 90 ff., 105, 134; Förstemann, 28-35; Kolde, *Luther's Stellung*, 92, 96; Spalatin, *Annalen*, 19 ff.; Buchholtz, I, 345; Pallavicini, *Hist. Conc. Trid.*, I, cap. xxv; Maurenbrecher, *Studien und Skizzen*, 263-4; Kalkoff, *Die Depeschen Aleanders vom Wormser Reichstage*, 171; *Reichstagsakten*, I, 718 ff.

³ Brieger, *Aleander*, 218, and his *Neue Mitteilungen über Luther in Worms*, 12 ff.; Baumgarten, II, 234 ff.; Höfler, 284 ff.; Hefele-Hergenröther IX, 308.

was the supreme ruler of Europe. The real authority rested with the princes. Luther was neither a statesman nor a theologian of such commanding gifts as to succeed where Hus had failed, had it not been for the impotence of the Holy Roman Empire. The times were ripe and the hands of the central authorities were tied. There were standing armies, but they belonged to the princes. There were taxes, but they were levied by the princes. The Empire had as little power as that assigned by Luther to the Church in 1523.

The princes were potent, and the misfortune of the Reformation is that they were oligarchs. *Divide et impera* was the motto of Germany. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there were no less than 300 principalities and communities within the borders of the Empire. The task of Luther was not the task of Wyclif, facing a king with a strong executive. No doubt the reformer was a man of genius. Some men are happy in the opportunities of their death: he was, however, decidedly fortunate in the opportunity of his birth, of his appearance on the scene of reform. Had Germany been a *Bundesstaat*, a Federal State, not a *Staatenbund*, a Confederation of States, no such chance would have been vouchsafed to him. He would have accomplished much, but he would not have cut his name so deeply on the history of Germany. He was a great man and he had a great opportunity; and the combination of a personality with a relentlessly growing tendency was irresistible. Had the Emperor remained at peace with the other kings and the Pope, Luther would have been in great danger. Fortunately for him, the Emperor was at war with France, with the Turks, or with the Pope. Francis I, Suleiman I, and Leo X himself, thus proved the warmest friends of the Reformation movement.

In spite of his complaints and those of Duke George of Saxony, the Emperor gave his commands, but the Reichsregiment did not carry them out.¹ In Nürnberg, for example, Lutheran doctrines were preached and Lutheran books printed and sold. The Imperial Vicegerent, the Count Palatine Frederick, explained to the Duke how impossible it was to take action. The Chancellor under the Vicegerent and assessor at the Reichstag, Johann von Fuchstein, assured Franz von Sickingen, a Lutheran knightly sympathizer, who was then plotting against the imperial constitution, that the Council of Regency was not unfriendly to him. The Elector Frederick of Saxony extended to Luther his practical though not his theoretical

¹ Chmel, *Actenstücke*, pp. 21-4, 36-9, 53-6.

adherence. Frederick's minister, Hans von Planitz, informed the Council that his master proposed to countenance Luther's residence at Wittenberg.

The Elector of Saxony summoned two of his councillors and Spalatin, and they conveyed Luther to the castle on the Wartburg, where he remained hidden. The party of the prophet had been ecclesiastical: the ban made it national. Leo X, just as much as Charles V, had henceforth to reckon with the German nation. To the people he was another Moses, another Paul. He was a greater father of the Church than St. Austin, so one of his followers declared in the market-place before an assembled multitude. At once there were on sale pictures of the hero with the nimbus of the saint round his head, or the Holy Ghost hovering over him in the shape of a dove. In some Hutten was put near him, and both were represented as champions of Christian freedom.¹ On June 15, 1520, Luther had been excommunicated. On May 26, 1521—though the deed was officially dated May 8—he was put under the ban of the Empire. The defection of Leo X, May 21, had irritated the French court. The election of Adrian VI had alarmed national sentiment. As a man he was admired. He was honest in intention, pure in manners, and zealous in reformation. As a Pope he was German.

Raphael died on April 6, 1520, and Leo X on December 1, 1521. The Pope had at once been the patron of the artist and the persecutor of the prophet. The sun of Raphael set gloriously in death: the sun of Luther seemed to set just as ingloriously in disgrace. Yet the fame of the painter has decreased while that of the prophet has increased. Both painted the papacy though with widely different colours. With outward difference there was inward agreement. The one stood as much for the individual in art as the other stood for the individual in religion. The one painted the beauty of body and mind and the freedom of every true artist. The other painted the beauty of holiness of each human soul. Among the fathers and teachers of the Church Raphael does not forget to represent Dante and Savonarola. On the spectator, however, the effect of Raphael's frescoes in the Stanze, of his pictures in the Vatican, of Michael Angelo's ceiling in the Sistine chapel and of Bramante's St. Peter, is to visualize the greatness of the Church in general and of the papacy in particular.

From May 4, 1521, to March 1, 1522, Luther remained at the Wartburg. There is little of his love of nature in the

¹ Aleander in Friedrich, 99; Balan, 40; Brieger, 40-1; Schuchardt, II, 189-91, 312-3.

letters he wrote in solitude. He confides in Melancthon, asking the question, "Who knows, in the counsels of silence, what work God is planning on these heights?"¹ He who is to receive a message from God, must be alone with the Alone. It was so with St. Paul, who after the experience on the road to Damascus spent over a year in the solitudes near Mount Sinai, a spot hallowed by the retirement to it of Moses and Elijah. It is noteworthy that the profoundest book St. Paul wrote, the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the greatest book of uninspired religious genius, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, were written in jails. Mohammed meditated his message on the mount above Mecca, Dante pondered his poem in the sylvan solitudes of Fonte Avellena, and Cervantes wrote the saddest book in the world in the seclusion of a prison. All men who have a message to their fellows come to realize the justice of the remark Dr. Copleston addressed to Newman, once meeting him taking his lonely walk, "Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus." As Luther was about to leave the Wartburg in 1522 he assured his Elector that he "had received the Gospel not from man, but from heaven alone, through our Lord Jesus Christ."² That very year in his *Wyder den falsch genantten geystlichen Standt* he declared his word, office, and work to be from God. He was quite certain that Christ, who was the master of his doctrine, called him to be an evangelist and regarded him as such.³ Under pain of eternal wrath he was forced to preach the message which God had given him in a vision.⁴ In 1523 he was certain that he had his doctrines from heaven.⁵

In the Wartburg his pen was not idle. He composed the booklet *Von der Beicht ob der Bapst Macht habe zu gepieten*, 1521, in which he thrusts aside the compulsory duty of confession. Man "is at liberty to make use of confession if, as, and where he chooses. If he does not wish you may not compel him, for no one has a right to or ought to force any man against his will. Nevertheless, absolution is a great gift from God. In the same way no man can or ought to be forced to believe, but every one should be instructed in the gospel and admonished to believe, though he is left free to obey or not to obey. All the sacraments should be left optional to every one. Whoever does not wish to be baptized, let him

¹ Enders, III, No. 431, May 12, 1521.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 106; *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 296, end of Feb., 1522.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 106 ff.; Erl. ed., 28, p. 143 ff.

⁴ Lauterbach, *Tagebuch*, p. 81.

⁵ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 2, p. 184; *Opp. lat. var.*, 6, p. 391: "Certus sum, dogmata mea habere me de cœlo."

be. Whoever does not wish to receive the sacrament has a right not to receive. Therefore, whoever does not wish to confess is free before God not to do so.”¹ It is evident that he objects to constraint in the case of any of the sacraments. This dread of force is also clear in his letter to Haupold: “I will have no forcing and compelling. Faith and baptism I commend. No one, however, may be forced to accept it, but only admonished and then left free to choose.”²

Outside the walls of Wartburg Castle the tone was quite different. Wittenberg professors, like Carlstadt, Amsdorf and Jonas, had supported the Augustinians in changes they made in public worship. Melancthon admonished the Elector on his duty as a Christian prince, telling him to “make haste to abrogate the abuse of the Mass” in his country and principality, “in order that your Electoral Highness may not, like Capernaum, be reproached by Christ at the last day on account of the great grace and mercy which, without any work of ours, has been shown in your Electoral Highness’s lands, the holy evangel being revealed, manifested, and brought to light, and yet all to no purpose.” In this admonition Melancthon assumed the frightful principle that the “salvation of his soul required a Christian prince” to prohibit Catholic worship.

When Luther left the castle he wrote to Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, not feeling sure how far his protection would extend. “In the sight of men it behoves your Electoral Highness to act as follows: As Elector to render obedience to the power established and allow his Imperial Majesty to dispose of life and property in the towns and lands subject to your Electoral Highness, as is right and in accordance with the laws of the Empire; nor to oppose or resist, or seek to place any obstacle or hindrance in the way of the aforesaid power should it wish to lay hands on me to kill me. . . . If your Electoral Highness were a believer, you would see in this the glory of God, but since you are not a believer you have seen nothing so far.”³ Two days later he informs Frederick, his Elector, that the princes who were hostile to the movement did not realize that they were “forcing the people to rebel, and behaving as though they wished themselves or their children to be exterminated. This without a doubt God will send as a punishment.” He declared he had no wish to interfere, yet through the useful

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 157; Erl. ed., 27, p. 343.

² Letter to Haupold and others, Sept. 17, 1521, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 16², pp. 53, 77 and 257; *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 236.

³ To the Elector Frederick, March 5, 1522, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 108 ff. *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 298.

Spalatin he requested Frederick to have the Mass prohibited as idolatrous.¹

On Sunday, March 7, 1522, in Wittenberg, Martin Luther began a course of eight sermons which he finished the following Sunday. Eight sermons he preached in eight days, and the people crowded to hear the message of the reformer. These sermons all breathed the spirit of that delightful book, *The Freedom of a Christian Man*. What he wrote so eloquently in 1520 he spoke no less eloquently in 1522. Truth was to be the master-motive of men, but truth was to be spoken in love. With Christian freedom must be combined Christian *caritas*. There was to be charity towards the weak, for faith was worthless without charity. No man, he plainly laid down, has the right to compel his brother in matters that are left free, and among these are marriage, the monastic life, private confession, fasting, images in churches, and the like. The Word of God and moral suasion must be allowed to carry out their appointed work. Was it not clear that St. Paul preached against the idols of Athens without knocking down one of them, nevertheless they fell in consequence of his powerful preaching? "Summa summarum," Luther boldly proclaimed, "I will preach, but I will force no one; for faith must be voluntary. Take me as an example. I stood up against the Pope, indulgences, and all papists, but without violence or uproar. I only urged, preached, and declared God's Word, nothing else. And yet while I was slumbering or drinking Wittenberg beer with my Philip Melanchthon and Amsdorf, the Word inflicted more serious damage on popery than prince or emperor. I did nothing, the Word did everything. Had I appealed to force, all Germany might have been deluged with blood; yea, I might have kindled a conflict at Worms, so that the Emperor would not have been secure. But what would have been the outcome? Ruin and desolation of body and soul. I therefore kept quiet, and gave the Word free course throughout the world. Do you know what the Devil thinks when he sees men employ violence to propagate the gospel? He sits with folded arms behind the fire of hell, and says with malignant looks and frightful grin, 'Ah, how wise these madmen are to play my game! Let them go on; I shall reap the benefit. I delight in it.' But when he sees the Word running and contending alone on the battlefield, then he shudders and shakes for fear. The Word is almighty, and takes captive all hearts.'" ² It

¹ To the Elector Frederick, March 7, 1522, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 111; *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 298.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 28, pp. 219, 260.

was in keeping with the letter Luther had written to Spalatin, January 16, 1521: "You perceive what Hutten aims at. I would not have the Gospel defended by violence and murder. In this sense I wrote to him. By the Word the world was conquered; by the Word the Church was preserved; by the Word she will be restored. Antichrist, as he began without violence, will be crushed without violence by the Word." The following year disaster overtook Sickingen, an ally of Hutten's, confirming Luther in his belief in the uselessness of force.¹

Erasmus always distinguished between Luther and the extremists of his party, and on September 3, 1522, he pointed out to Duke George of Saxony the importance of this distinction. This very year Luther could apply the conception of the liberty of a Christian man to the interpretation of the Bible. Formerly, he concedes, they were supposed to have no power to decide, but by the gospel which he preached, "all the Councils have been overthrown and set aside." No one on earth has any right to decide what is to be believed. "If I have the right to decide what is false doctrine, then I must have the right to judge." Pope and Council may decree what they please, "but I have my own right to judge, and I may accept it or not as I please." At the hour of death, he continues, each one must see for himself how he stands: "You must be sharp enough to decide for yourself that this is right and that wrong, otherwise it is impossible for you to hold your own." "Your head is in danger, your life is at stake; God must speak within your breast and say, 'This is God's Word,' otherwise all is uncertain. Thus must you be convinced within yourself, independent of all men."²

Luther employed "every artifice to prove that it was the right of each individual Christian to judge of the preaching of the Gospel and of the avoiding of false prophets."³ According to him the authority of the Church is intended merely to foster piety, and a spiritual governing power would result in compulsion and simply make the people impious.⁴ In this stage of his career he was so full of the idea of the congregation that in order to support it he appeals to natural law. In order to save souls every congregation, government or individual, has by nature the right to make every effort to drive away the wolves, that is, the clergy of the Antichrist. No apathy

¹ E. Münch, *Fr. v. Sickingen*, 1827 ff.; Strauss, *Ulrich v. Hutten*, 488.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 10, 3, p. 258 ff.; Erl. ed., 13², p. 228 ff.

³ Luther's memorandum for the Town Council of Altenburg, April 18, 1522, *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 347 ff.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 251 ff.; Erl. ed., 22, p. 68.

can be permitted where it is a question of eternal salvation. The alleged rights and the inherited possession of the foe on which they base their corruptive influence must not be spared. He protests that "their authority is at an end, abrogated by God Himself, if it be in conflict with the Gospel."¹ The holy brotherhood of the Spirit, proclaims this mystic, was to arise, knowing no constraint but charity only, with a ministry but with no official power. "The freedom of the Spirit, which must reign, makes all things which are merely corporal and earthly indifferent and not necessary." "All things are indifferent and free." "Paul demands the preservation of unity, but this is unity of the spirit, not of place, of persons, of things or bodies."² Yet "not only the spirit but also the secular power must yield to the evangel, whether cheerfully or otherwise, as all the accounts contained in the Bible abundantly show."³ As place did not matter, the way is open for the conception of the Invisible Church. In his *Large Catechism* he assumes that the communion of saints means the Holy Christian Church.

The law of nature occupies an important though subordinate place in the theology of Luther. At one time he gives it the Roman meaning of "natural equity,"⁴ and the kindred one that it is the ordinance "which also heathen, Turks and Jews must keep."⁵ The imperial jurisconsults found in it the origin of international law, and Luther found in it the source of all written law. He develops its importance when he sees it as a law of reason which "issuing from free reason overleaps all books,"⁶ and is in truth the Christian law of love which also the Lord declares in Luke vi. 31 and Matthew vii. 12, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."⁷ It is easy to make the deduction that there is in existence apart from the sacred record a natural law which binds the conscience of all, and it is no less easy to see that one day such a law depends solely for its efficacy on the inward monitor. Kant can wonder at the moral law within, but utterances like the preceding paved the way for its existence. The teaching of Romans ii. 15 influenced Luther to some

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 349.

² *Ibid.*, p. 720.

³ March 7, 1522, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 111 ff.; *Briefwechsel*, 6, p. 274.

⁴ *Ermahnung zum Frieden auf die 12 Artikel der Bauern*, Erl. ed., 24^a, p. 290; cf. *Tischreden*, ed. Förstemann and Bindseil, 3, p. 320; 4, p. 486; *Warnung an seine lieben Deutschen*, Erl. ed., 25^a, p. 15.

⁵ *Ermahnung*, pp. 279, 282.

⁶ *Von weltlicher Obrigkeit*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 105.

⁷ *Grosser Sermon vom Wucher*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 49.

extent.¹ Melanchthon knew how Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle valued this idea.

The conception of natural law influenced the fertile mind of Lorenzo Valla. In his three Ciceronian dialogues on *Lust*, written in 1431, he compares the claims of Epicurean, Stoic, and Christian morality on mankind.² Though Christian morality wins, it is obvious that Valla entertains a lively admiration for the Epicurean school. The claims of nature are urged, for are they not good and laudable? Wine is the father of all pleasures, a sentiment which Valla cannot reconcile with Christianity. Celibacy is a crime, for nature is against it, and Platonic influence is evident in the author's defence of the community of wives.

Natural law was to impress the eighteenth century marvellously: we are apt to forget how much it changed the sixteenth. John Knox,³ George Buchanan, Richard Hooker,⁴ Hubert Languet,⁵ François Hotman,⁶ Juan Mariana,⁷ Lambert Daneau and Johannes Althusius⁸ were all believers in natural law. The Old Testament justified resistance to tyranny, and when this justification was combined with the natural law doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, democracy was beginning to find a basis for its position. Hooker, like Aquinas, can discern the origin of the State in a social contract made under the regime of the law of nature.⁹ A king, he asserts, who does not base his decrees upon the general consent is a tyrant.¹⁰

The destinies of theories are strange. In the sixteenth century the conception of natural right is a friend of freedom, and in the seventeenth century a friend to absolutism. In his *De Jure belli et pacis* Grotius analyses with penetrating power the new conception; Hobbes employs it to defend the Stuart policy; Milton and Roger Williams to set forth the advantages of toleration. The law of nature succeeded in preserving that toleration which was at last the fruits of the Revolution of

¹ Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 457; Loofs, *Leitfaden zum Stud. der Dogmengesch.*, 721-2, 770-5, 778; E. Ehrhardt, *La notion du droit naturel chez Luther*, passim.

² Voigt, *Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums*, I, 469.

³ *Works*, IV, pp. 496 ff., 539 ff. Contrast J. Calvin's closing chapter of the *Institutio*.

⁴ *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, I, pp. 178-81.

⁵ Cf. his *Vindiciæ contra tyrannos*.

⁶ Cf. his *Franco-Gallia*.

⁷ Cf. his *De rege et regis institutione*.

⁸ Cf. his *Politics*; cf. also Gierke, *J. Althusius*, 144 f.

⁹ *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, I, p. 186 ff.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I, p. 191 ff.

1688, and this forms one of its most notable services. It has an after-history, apart from Rousseau, in the eighteenth century, for the Deists in England and the supporters of the *Aufklärung* in Germany developed the conception.

The inhabitants of Eilenburg, Altenburg, Schwarzburg, and Wittenberg soon ascertained how far the law of nature applied to them. At Eilenburg those in favour of the innovations were of opinion that if the Elector Frederick invited them to apply for a preacher they would do so.¹ Luther accordingly wrote to the Court Chaplain, Spalatin, asking him to employ his influence with the Elector in the usual way. He was to obtain from the latter a letter addressed to the town councillors begging them to "yield to the poor people in this so vital and sacred a matter," and to summon one of two preachers whom he at once proposed. His reason is "the duty of the sovereign, as ruler and brother Christian, to drive away the wolves and to be anxious for the welfare of his people."² In 1522 the canons of Altenburg resisted the appointment of a Lutheran preacher in that town, but neither their chartered rights nor the influence of the civil power availed anything against the masterful reformer.³ "Against this (i.e. the introduction of his message) no seals, briefs, customs or right are valid," he maintains. It was the plain duty of Frederick "as a Christian ruler to encounter the wolves."⁴ In his extreme desire to gain his own way he informed his Elector that "God Himself has abrogated all authority and power where it is opposed to the evangel. We must obey God rather than man."⁵ In Schwarzburg, Count John Henry sympathized with the reformers. The monks in his domain held their livings on the condition that they should "above all things preach the gospel." He applied to Luther for a solution of his difficulty, and was advised to summon them before him in the presence of witnesses and to prove from their replies that they had not preached the true Gospel. Then he would possess "the right and power, indeed it would be his duty, to take the livings away from them . . . for it is not unjust but an urgent duty to drive away the wolf from the sheepfold. . . . No preacher receives property and possessions for doing harm,

¹ Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), 1, 190; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 1, 559; Seidemann, *Erläuterungen*, 35 ff.

² On May 5, 1522, *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 351.

³ *Briefe*, 1, 190; *Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), 45 ff.; Köstlin, 1, 558-9; Seckendorf, 1, 214.

⁴ To the Elector Frederick of Saxony, May 8, 1522, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 134; *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 356.

⁵ Acts v. 29.

but in order that he may make men pious. If, therefore, he does not make them pious, the goods are no longer his." The application of this far-reaching principle threw Saxony into the hands of the reforming party.

In 1523 the canons of the collegiate church of Wittenberg continued to celebrate Mass, and Luther protested.¹ They appealed to the authority of the Elector, and the reformer argued in one of his sermons, preached on August 2, 1523, that the Elector commanded only in worldly matters.² Simultaneously he sustained the position that the authorities must punish such public blasphemy as the Mass. The Elector and his Councillors quickly detected the flaw in his argument. They remarked in their letter of November 24, 1524, that "he himself taught that the Word should be left to maintain itself, and that this it would do in its own good time, as God willed," dryly adding that he ought to be the first "to practise what he taught and preached."³ Nevertheless, Luther persisted in his policy of intolerance in Wittenberg and succeeded in ejecting the canons.

The formation of a body is in the thought of Luther and Melancthon from 1522 to 1530, though naturally the Peasants' War considerably stimulated it. As Erasmus sought a basis for authorship in the agreement of the Fathers, they sought it in the Bible as they literally interpreted it. The dangers of individualism were daily becoming more apparent. The process of belief must become hardened into dogma: there must be a scheme of organization. Pastors were required: so too were princes.

All revolutionary bodies in time come to see that compromise is inevitable. Carlstadt, the Archdeacon of Wittenberg, saw this stage arrive. He had a mind keenly sharpened by the use of dialectic, and from the remarks of his friend, Luther, he drew conclusions which the reformer did not want to accept. If all are priests, why should there be a regular ministry? If the theory of transubstantiation is false, how can there be any real presence in Holy Communion? What was Carlstadt to think of a man who declared that the sacraments only operated by faith, and at the same time recognized in them a work of sancti-

¹ *Briefe*, I, 36; 2, 354-6, 365, 563, 620; 3, 3 ff., 34, 102, 129; 6, 54, 713; *Briefwechsel*, 197; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 14, 278; 29, 191; Kolde, *Friedrich der Weise*, 65-71; Köstlin-Kawerau, 24; Paulus, 10; Tentzel Cyprian, 2, 372; Spalatin, *Lat. Annalen*, 647; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 799; Winterfeld, *Evangel. Kirchengesang*, I, 150 f., 163 ff.

² To the Wittenberg Canons, July 11, 1523, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 12, p. 649; Erl. ed., 17^a, pp. 53, 57, 178 ff.; *Briefe*, 4, p. 176.

³ *Luther's Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), p. 76.

fication and grace? A synthesis was a matter this logical revolutionary could not entertain. To Carlstadt if there was soul on one side, there was body on the other; if there was the spirit on one side, there was the letter on the other; if there was the Law, there were also the Prophets; if there was external authority, there was also internal. His mind conceived truth as a series of contradictories. The true filiation of thought was a seven-sealed book to him. He possessed all the certainty derivable from his mysticism. Subjective as he is, individualistic as he is, he represents lay Christian Puritanism. Carlstadt rejected the worship of the saints, purgatory, and prayers for the dead. He was probably the first man in the sixteenth century to reach the conclusion that there ought to be neither dogma nor institution.

In his history of the Oxford Movement, Dean Church has much to say about the influence of W. G. Ward upon the development of Cardinal Newman's thought. Ward was as logical as Carlstadt: Newman was as illogical as his own countrymen. Ward constantly asked Newman, "If you think so and so, surely you must also say something more." Newman was thus obliged to make each conclusion Ward drew the basis of a fresh set of premises. The result was that the leader of the Oxford Movement advanced at a pace much more rapid than his natural one. When a thinker is in a state of doubt a questioner such as Ward not only forces him to resolve, but also by the persistence of his interrogatories raises additional difficulties. "There is no doubt," remarks Dean Church,¹ "that Mr. Newman felt the annoyance and unfairness of this perpetual question for the benefit of Mr. Ward's theories, and there can be little doubt that, in effect, it drove him onwards and cut short his time of waiting. Engineers tell us that, in the case of a ship rolling in a sea-way, when the periodic times of the ship's roll coincide with those of the undulations of the waves, a condition of things arises highly dangerous to the ship's stability. So the agitations of Mr. Newman's mind were reinforced by the impulses of Mr. Ward's."

What, in effect, Ward was to Newman, Carlstadt aimed at becoming to Luther.² The moderate Melancthon saw this: the native good sense of Luther saw it. They resolved that their party should not be at the mercy of its own extremists.

¹ *The Oxford Movement*, p. 365.

² K. Müller, *Luther u. Karlstadt*, 175-8, 194; Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 687. Cf. Jäger; *Carlstadt*, 11; Löscher, *Reformations-Akta*, 2, 62 ff.; *Luther's Briefe* (De Wette), I, 125 f.; *Colloquia* (Bindseil), 2, 214, 240; *Asterici*, *Op.*, I, 410 ff.; *Eck's Briefe*, *Op.* I, 409 f.; Barge, I, 402-5.

The leaders of the main body were determined no longer to be reinforced by the advances of the extreme section, and Carlstadt became the enemy of Luther. The result of his action, unlike Ward's, was to throw the guidance of the body into a conservative direction. The ideas of Carlstadt did not disappear, and indeed from 1523 to 1525 they spread with great rapidity along the Rhine and in Switzerland: they lacked henceforth official approval.¹ Luther opposed the complete break with the past on which Carlstadt insisted, and which the radical archdeacon pressed on Zwingli with such fatal success. As Erasmus witnessed the failure of Carlstadt's logical thought, he wrote in 1525, "Luther is almost orthodox."²

The difficulties between the believers of Strassburg and Zürich is much in the mind of Erasmus.³ Exiled Frenchmen like Farel, the precursor of Calvin, absorbed at Bâle the extreme views of Carlstadt: in turn, he sent them back to his native land, imposing on France a far more extreme form of doctrine than that of Luther and Melanchthon. It would scarcely be an exaggeration, from this standpoint, to say that Carlstadt is as much responsible for the failure of the French Reformation as any other man.

¹ Cf. Barge's fine book, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, II, p. 224 ff.; cf. also Enders, V, Nos. 835, 846-7.

² *Epist.*, p. 911.

³ Cf. his *Contra quosdam qui se falso vocant evangelicos*, *Opp.*, X.: "Quid illis cum Luthero," p. 1580.

CHAPTER VI

THE ATTITUDE OF ERASMUS

THE excommunication of Luther in 1520 had rendered Erasmus even more guarded in his correspondence.¹ His censure of the reformer tends to increase in severity, though in his desire to find a *via media* he is willing to extend his approval to much of Luther's action. The Papal Bull of 1520 he describes in one of his letters after its official publication as an unfortunate mistake, showing want of charity. A peaceful adjustment of the controversy might easily have been reached by means of a council of wise men.² The enemies, however, of the condemned man do not think of convincing him: they are resolved on his destruction.³ Two Universities have condemned Luther: they have not convinced him. To Cardinal Campeggio he admits that no one is better able than the former to arouse warmth for evangelical doctrine.⁴ The needful task then is to refute clearly his erroneous views and to believe warmly his just ones. Persuasion is the plan. It is the mark of asses to be compelled, of tyrants to compel.⁵ Erasmus urged in three memorials his solution. Was there any reason why Martin Luther should not be tried by learned and unprejudiced judges? Why should not the kings of England and Hungary appoint these judges? The more he thought about this plan the better he liked it. He eagerly sought opportunities of meeting the envoys of the King of Hungary in the Netherlands, and he no less eagerly sought an interview with the King of England.⁶

¹ Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 1, 284 ff.; Kampschulte, 2, 31 f. Cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 1, 205; *Epist. Hutten* (Böcking), 1, 341, 362; Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), 1, 335, 345; *Op. varii arg.*, 4, 190; *Comment. in epist. ad Galatas*, 3, 135.

² Redlich, 65. Yet see Nollhac, *Érasme en Italie*, 112 ff.

³ Erasmus's letter to Archbishop Albert of Mayence, Nov. 1, 1520.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Cardinal Campeggio, Dec. 6, 1520, 594 B.

⁵ *Consilium*: "Asinorum est cogi tantum, tyrannorum cogere."

⁶ Kalkoff, *Vermittel.*, 17 ff.; Meyer, 44 ff.

In July 1520 he met the latter. Henry VIII, with his belief in controversy, urged that the scholar should write against the reformer—an idea that was one day to bear fruit. Erasmus raised the general question of the peace of the Church.¹

Erasmus is quite clear that those who favour Luther are really good men. His sympathies with the Wittenberg professor were alienated by the tone of the controversial pamphlets now issued. On July 6, 1520, he wrote to Spalatin warning him that Luther was utterly lacking in moderation, and that Christ was certainly not guiding his pen: he hoped that Heaven would temper the style and mind of his master. He was not only anxious on his own account but he also manifested anxiety to retain men like Justus Jonas on his side.² As for himself, he professed that he would never be dragged away, either in life or death, from communion with the ecclesiastical authority ordained by God.³ His complaints concerning Luther's unrestrained violence and vituperation were ceaseless. He tells Peutinger, the friend of Poliziano, that the virulence of the pamphlets increases.⁴ He was well aware of the results that the teaching of Luther had produced on popular feeling, and he was also well aware of the effect of that feeling on the reformer himself, even attributing his obstinacy in great measure to the "plaudits of the world's stage," which had turned his head.⁵ In his letters he gives expression to the happy thought: the upheaval accomplished by the reformer was indeed a misfortune for his own age, but it might be a remedy for the future. There was also an upheaval in the Western world, for the very day after Erasmus wrote this important letter Cortez gained the battle which decided the fate of Mexico.

In 1520 and 1521 Erasmus says that he had been the first to condemn the Wittenberg teaching because he had foreseen danger and disturbance. There, however, he dwells more on the injury to learning. To Leo X he writes, "Free and generous minds rejoice to be taught, they are unwilling to be driven."⁶ Such a work of teaching is not for him. For one thing, he has not the ability, and for another his absorbing studies leave him no leisure to read the books of Luther.⁷ Indeed he is so little

¹ Erasmus's letter to Laurinus, Feb. 1, 1523.

² *Opp.*, III, p. 639 ff. Cf. Erasmus's letter to Luther, May 30, 1519, Allen, III, 605.

³ *Corp. Reform.*, I, p. 698 (1525).

⁴ Nov. 9, 1520, 590 D.

⁵ *Corp. Reform.*, I, p. 693.

⁶ Sept. 13, 1520, Ep. dxxix, 578 A.

⁷ Erasmus's letter to Leo X, Sept. 13, 1520, III, 578. Cf. Stichart, pp. 328-31; Hartfelder, 135 ff.

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a specialist in theology that he asks the theologians of Louvain to furnish him with solid arguments.¹ In 1521 he tells Mountjoy: "Had I known beforehand that events would shape themselves so, I would either have refrained from writing certain matters or have written them differently."² He hears from his English correspondent that he is accused of favouring Luther, and is desired to purge himself by writing against the reformer. He denies the charge. He thinks Luther was justified in exposing the evils of the time, which were patent to all, though he dislikes his manner of doing so. He is not the author of any of the Lutheran writings attributed to him, for he has never published anything anonymously; least of all would he oppose the decrees of the Pope.³ He is able to tell Jonas that he has confidence in Leo X and the mildness of Charles V⁴: no one can find the spirit of the Gospel in Luther. In any case, however, there are no words more odious to him than those of conspiracy, of schism, or of faction. Erasmus was indeed more papalist than Leo X himself. The only authority he desired to shake was that behind the scenes, the religious Orders, for he unmistakably thought their tyranny absolutely oppressive. Their wealth was so great that they were able to impose their will on the Papacy, and in not a few cases they were quite independent of the princes. Their influence encouraged gross superstitions on the part of the people, which were most abhorrent to the chief of the new knowledge. From the time of his letter to Jonas, Erasmus realizes that Luther is bringing about not a reformation, but a revolution.

The humanist wishes, so he writes to Richard Pace, that some *deus ex machina* would bring to a happy conclusion the tragedy that Luther has so inauspiciously begun. He has put a sword into the hand of his foes, and seems bent on his own destruction, though often advised by Erasmus and other friends to moderate the sharpness of his style. His bitterness is such that even if all he writes were true it would not turn to much account. He fears that the Jacobites and theologians will use their victory immoderately, especially those of Louvain, who have a private hatred against him, and have found a most convenient instrument for this purpose in Aleander. He is

¹ Erasmus's letter to Gottschalk Rosemond, Oct. 18, 1520, 585 E.

² *Opp.*, III, p. 681. Cf. Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Ref.*, 247 ff.

³ *Epist.*, XVII, 26.

⁴ May 10, 1521. On May 12, 1521, Erasmus wrote to Jonas: "Ad primum gustum opusculorum, quæ Lutheri nomine prodire coeperant, plane verebar ne res exiret in tumultum ac publicum orbis dissidium," *Opp.*, III, Ep. 2, p. 639 D.

furious by nature and requires no additional prompting. The most abusive pamphlets fly on all sides ; all of which Aleander attributes to Erasmus, though of many of them he had never heard except from Aleander. Luther acknowledges his own books, and attributes the *Babylonian Captivity* to Erasmus. He must be very prolific to produce so many books while hard at work in revising the New Testament and correcting St. Augustine, besides other studies. There is not a syllable of his in all Luther's books, and he has never published anything abusive.

They are now showing that Luther has taken a great deal from his books, as if he had not taken still more from St. Paul's Epistles. He sees now that the Germans wish to drag him into Luther's affairs against his will. It is a foolish plan, more likely to alienate him. What help could he give to Luther if he shared his danger, except that two would perish for one ? He cannot sufficiently admire the spirit in which he writes. He has taught many things, but spoilt them by intolerable evils. Every one has not the strength for martyrdom.¹ He fears that if any tumult were to arise he would imitate St. Peter, and therefore follows popes and emperors when they make good laws, and bears with them when they pass bad ones. They are again attacking him for the dialogue of Julius ; and leave nothing untried to hinder not so much him as learning, which they do not like to see flourishing. Christ will protect him, Whose cause all his writings will serve when Luther has departed in ashes. Everywhere preachers and theologians are sounding their own praise. Wise princes take care that good laws be not relaxed, and this rage not let loose against men who are harmless, and deserve well of the Christian religion.²

The man who loves peace is evident in every line of this letter to Pace. What is the use of shrieking out that " Luther suppresses Purgatory, and blasphemes against God " ?³ Such useless noise merely " ennobles his books " and makes people hear of them who otherwise might never have known them.⁴

Erasmus is anxious to let Warham know that he has caught a glimpse of the King's book against Luther. He hopes other princes will follow Henry's example. From what he hears from Mountjoy and others he is convinced that the work is the

¹ " Non omnes ad martyrium satis habent roboris." Cf. his letter to Cardinal Campeggio, Dec. 6, 1520, 594 B : " Affectent alii martyrium, ego me non arbitror hoc honore dignum."

² Harleian, 6989, f. 4, B.M. I use Dr. Brewer's translation.

³ Erasmus's letter to Alex. Schweis, secretary, March 13, 1521.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to F. Chierigato, March 13, 1521.

King's own. Luther has sent strife into the world, which is everywhere in confusion. Great as were the evils of the Church,¹ the remedy is worse than the disease. He hates all this strife,² which is detrimental to the cause of letters. As soon as he has leisure he proposes to read all the books on each side of the Lutheran controversy.³ The same day he writes to Pace, saying he is in great pain at hearing nothing about his Commentaries. He has only seen the King's book in the hands of the nuncio Marini, and is very anxious to read it. He compliments the King on his performance.⁴ That his conscience was smiting him is obvious from the letter he wrote to Zwingli: "It seems to me that I have taught wellnigh all that Luther teaches, only less violently, and without so many enigmas and paradoxes."⁵ He had indeed developed almost all of them, but he had done so at the right time, he believed, in the right place and with the right use of language. Luther had not used the crowning virtue of moderation, whereas his moderation was known to all men. As late as September 3, 1522, Erasmus wrote to Duke George of Saxony, "It cannot be denied that Luther commenced to play an excellent part, and to vindicate the cause of Christ—which had been wiped off the face of the earth—amidst great and general applause."⁶ Little as either Erasmus or Luther suspected it, on the sixth of this month happened an event which powerfully influenced their doctrine. On that day Magellan's squadron completed the circumnavigation of the world.

The rift in the teaching of the two men is hinted at in the letter of the scholar to Louis Marlian, declaring that unlike Luther he had never pretended "that all human actions were sins."⁷ When Luther heard in 1522 that Erasmus was about to oppose his teaching on free will, he was moved to make remarks in his letters which seriously provoked his opponent. On May 15, 1522, Luther declared that "Erasmus has at last

¹ J. v. Walter, *Das Wesen der Religion nach Erasmus und Luther*, 7; A. Freitag in the Preface to *De Servo Arbitrio*, Weim. ed., 18, 594; Strauss, 2, 289-91.

² Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 184; Schlottmann, 241; Friedrich, *Die Briefe Aleanders*, 102, 111, 115-6. Cf. *Archiv. für Reformationsgesch.*, 3. Jahr., Hft. i, p. 79, for P. Kalkoff's article on "Römische Urtheile über Luther und Erasmus im Jahre 1521."

³ Erasmus's letter to Warham, Aug. 13, 1521, *Epist.*, XIV, 7.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Pace, Aug. 13, 1521, *Epist.*, XIV, 8.

⁵ Zwingli, *Opp.*, VII, p. 310, Aug. 31, 1521. Cf. Erasmus's letter to P. Barbirius, Aug. 13, 1521, 653 f.

⁶ Sept. 3, 1522, *Opp.*, III, p. 731. Cf. F. Gess, *Akten u. Brief zur Kirchenpolitik Herzog Georgs* (Leipzig, 1905), 351-2.

⁷ Erasmus's letter to Louis Marlian, March 25, 1521.

shown in his correspondence his profound hate for Luther and his doctrine ; but his language astutely simulates friendship. He will lose by it all his glory and all his renown. Better is the open and frank hostility of Johann Eck. I detest the shifty policy and the cunning of this man, now my friend, now my enemy.”¹ In a letter to Caspar Borner, the Leipzig professor, he stated that Erasmus understood less about these matters than the schools of the Sophists, that is, the Schoolmen. “I have no fear of being vanquished so long as I do not alter my opinion.” “Truth is stronger than eloquence, the spirit mightier than talent, faith greater than learning. It is to stammering truth and not to lying eloquence that the victory belongs.” With that habitual confidence which constituted so much of his strength, he says that were he only to stammer forth the truth he would still be sure of vanquishing the eloquence of the far-famed Erasmus. He did not wish to vex the scholar, but should he dare to attack he would be forced to confess that “Christ fears neither the gates of hell nor the powers of the air.” Did not he, Luther, know the very thoughts of Satan?² In a sermon of 1522 against Carlstadt, who maintained the Zwinglian view that the body of Christ is not present in the bread in the Eucharist, Luther maintained, “I will preach, I will talk, I will write, but I will force and constrain no man with violence, for faith is by nature voluntary and uncompelled, and is to be received without compulsion.”³

The humanist heard of the letter of May 28, 1522. With the expressions it contained, viz., spirit, truth, faith, triumph of Christ, he was familiar, for they were Lutheran watchwords. In season and out of season the disciples employed the language of the master. “All,” wrote Erasmus in 1524 to Theodore Hexius, “have these five words always on their lips: evangel, God’s Word, faith, Christ, and Spirit, and yet I see many behave so that I cannot doubt them to be possessed by the devil.”⁴ He saw in them the same failures, the same narrowness of outlook, the same intolerance, the same proceedings against those who refused to follow them in everything, as

¹ Luther’s letter to Spalatin, May 15, 1522, De Wette. Cf. Schmidt, *Melanchthon*, 87; Paulus, *Protestantismus u. Toleranz im 16. Jahr.*, 4.

² On May 28, 1522, *Briefswechsel*, 3, p. 375. It is not certain that this letter was addressed to Caspar Borner.

³ *Opp.*, III, p. 809. Cf. his letter to Duke George of Saxony, Sept. 4, 1524, p. 813, and to Melanchthon, Sept. 6, 1524, p. 667; cf. also F. Gess, *Akten u. Brief zur Kirchenpolitik Herzog Georgs*, 352.

⁴ Cf. *Werke*, Erl. ed., 28, p. 219.

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they denounced in their opponents.¹ "They rage against me as an adversary," he tells Mazzolini, "and truly I am."² He returned to the main question when he informed Zwingli, August 31, 1523, that he refused to admit "that all the acts of the saints were sins unworthy of the Divine compassion, that free will was an empty word, and that faith alone justified man."³

Dislike of too much dogma⁴ is the motive in the letter the scholar penned to Carondelet, Archbishop of Palermo, January 5, 1522: "May he not have fellowship with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit who cannot explain, to the reason of a philosopher, what separates the Father from the Son, and what separates both from the Holy Ghost, what marks the difference between the nativity of the Son and the procession of the Spirit? If I believe in what has been handed down, the Trinity in Unity, what's the use of disputation? If I don't believe no human reason will convince me. . . . The sum of our religion is peace and unanimity. This can only be when we define as little as possible, and when we leave the judgment free on many matters; besides, there is the immense obscurity of very many subjects. . . . Our present problems are awaiting an Œcumenical Council. Better let all such questions wait the time when speculation will be removed and we shall see God no longer darkly, but face to face."⁵ It was an earnest plea, but all sides except the writer were as anxious to define all matters as St. Thomas Aquinas himself.⁶

Erasmus drew a sharp line between the dogmas of the Church and the definitions of men, between religion and rites, between the laws of God and the laws of the Church.⁷ Now and always in a descending scale he sees dogmatic truths, theological truths, as certain or no more than probable or mere opinions.⁸ The Church imposes the first and no one can discuss them: the rest are in another category altogether, and there is for them freedom of discussion. The opinions include the systems

¹ Capito confirms this view in a letter to Erasmus, Oct. 14, 1521, p. 667: "Lutherani omnia furiosius, insolentius, arrogantius; mordicus quemlibet arripiunt."

² *Epist.*, p. 777, 1523: "In me debacchantur tanquam in adversarium, et vere sum."

³ "Lutherus proponit quædam ænigmata in speciem absurda: omnia opera sanctorum esse, peccata, quæ indigna ignoscantur Dei misericordia, liberum arbitrium esse nomen inane, sola fide justificatione."

⁴ Hess, I, 461; Kerker, 541.

⁵ *Epist.*, 690 F: "Summa nostræ religionis pax et unanimitas," p. 694.

⁶ Cf. *Pref. in Hilarium Epist.*, p. 693.

⁷ Cf. *Paraph.*, Mark vii. 7, p. 210.

⁸ Cf. *Præstigiæ libelli cujusdam detectio*, Jan. 1526, *Opp.*, X, pp. 1569-70.

of St. Austin, Aquinas and Occam on human liberty and grace, and the doctrine of Luther on justification.¹

The Reichsregiment appointed a committee to consider the Lutheran question and on this committee the Roman jurist, Johann von Schwarzburg, was an active member. In its report in 1523 the members refused to proceed against Luther. Let the Pope respect the Concordat, reduce the grievances of the German nation, and, above all, exact no more annates but surrender these from the first to the Imperial Vicegerent and the Reichsregiment. Let the Pope, with the consent of the Emperor, summon a Council in some German town within twelve months, and let the laity have seats and votes in it. If these conditions were granted, there was to be a truce to the meeting of the Council.² When the Pope pressed the Archduke Ferdinand, the Imperial viceroy, the Electors and princes, to execute the Edict of Worms, from the report of the committee, the answer was obvious. The Archduke admitted that the greater part of the nation had been convinced long before Luther's time, and had only been strengthened in this conviction by his writings. If the Council had carried out the Edict there would have been a burst of universal indignation: just as if its members had attempted to suppress truth and to maintain and defend odious unchristian abuses; and much sedition and tumult would have ensued. In endorsing the national attitude the Estates and the Committee agreed in begging the Pope to redress the financial and other grievances indicated in the report of 1523.³ The national aspect on which the reformer insisted appears in the Archduke's view that the Roman Curia had inflicted grave injustice on Germany. Rapid in thought as in action, quick in sympathy, genial in intercourse, eager for religion, anxious for power, Ferdinand was one day to take rank among the most statesmanlike of all the Holy Roman Emperors. He was just, he was conscientious, he was tactful, and the possession of these qualities combined with his statesmanship might have enabled him to offer a part solution of the problem his brother Charles V vainly attacked. The two brothers had not spent their childhood together, and circumstances separated them in their manhood. Their relations till late in life had been, in spite of jarring interests, cordial. Leo X considered Ferdinand had *piu spirito* than his

¹ Cf. *Adnotationes*, 320: "Hæc pro disputatis haberi volumus non pro decretis."

² *Reichstagakten*, XXXVIII, pp. 99-III; Höfler, *Adrian VI*, pp. 279-80.

³ Lunig, *Reichsarchiv.*, II, pp. 408-32.

brother, and Erasmus thought that in Ferdinand *magna spes est*. Ferdinand married the daughter of Vladislav of Hungary, ultimately permanently affecting the destinies of Europe by wearing the crowns of Bohemia and Hungary. *Tu felix Austria nube* is the orthodox remark to make, but it was also happy for Luther. For the inevitable war with the Turk compelled the new King of Hungary to neglect Germany during his brother's absence. He had been a zealous Roman Catholic, but in time he came to advocate the use of the cup by the laity at Mass, the marriage of priests, and the principle that Councils were above Popes. When Charles granted toleration to the Lutherans, he granted it only for a season. When Ferdinand granted it, he granted it after much thought and on a permanent basis.

Erasmus assures Cardinal Wolsey, March 7, 1522, that before Luther had published his *Assertions* and his *Babylonian Captivity* he had always advised him against doing so; but the books pleased almost everybody. He had no connexion with a Lutheran any more than Wolsey himself. Instead of upholding Luther, he acknowledges him to be wrong in many things, and always said so both to his friends and his enemies.¹ Witness the letters he wrote to Luther himself, if they will bring them forward. Many of his letters are circulated among his friends, especially one he wrote to the Bishop of Rochester from Bruges which he regrets has been published; but even this shows that he did not approve of Luther's proceedings. He said the same thing to Duke Frederick at Cologne, to the King of Denmark, and to the captain of the Bohemians, who made him the largest promises. This is the reason the Lutherans denounce him, and threaten him with spiteful pamphlets. How then came the rumour? Two divines at Louvain who hate Erasmus and literature, aided by some monks, will do anything to ruin him. . . The evil must be rooted out, the contagion is so widely spread. If he were to declare himself in three words a Lutheran, we should see a very different game among us and the Germans. But he has not written against Luther. No, for he had no leisure to write books, but wrote letters. He thought he could serve Christianity better otherwise.²

On November 20 Erasmus wrote to King Ferdinand of Hungary: "God grant that this drastic and bitter remedy, which, in consequence of Luther's apostasy, has stirred up all

¹ Erasmus's letter to L. Coronel, April 21, 1522, p. 714: "Exordium hujus fabulæ semper displicuit, quam videbam in seditionem exituram."

² *Vit. B. V.* 44, Brit. Mus.

the world like a body which is sick in every part, may have a wholesome effect for the recovery of Christian morals.”¹ The progress of Protestantism served to alienate the humanists, for with its progress there came the tendency to split up into sects. Erasmus was in the habit of referring to Luther’s work as a remedy. Such it proved to those who feared the new teaching would smash the unity of the Church. Inevitably those who were disposed to favour Luther shrank back as this prospect increasingly presented itself. Whatever the faults of the old Church were, she was better than this “seditious liberty,” this “clamour.” The Reformation seemed to have betrayed the hopes of thoughtful men. “I prefer,” confesses Erasmus, “the pontiffs, the bishops such as they are, to these pseudo-Pharisees who are much more intolerable.”² Luther had accomplished a great labour, yet many of his followers believed more earnestly in faith without works than in faith itself. The Holy Roman Empire was visibly dissolving before men’s eyes, for was not the territorial independence of the princes steadily advancing?

A change had come over the Papacy, for the new Pope was in the early part of the sixteenth century that singular kind of successor of St. Peter, a Christian. No two Popes could differ more widely than Leo X and his successor, Adrian VI.³ The one was as much a man of the world as the other was a man of religion. As a Dutch professor Adrian had lectured Erasmus, and he had been tutor to the Archduke Charles, the present Emperor. At his old University, Louvain, humanism had made little impression. Reform of the theology of the Church met with no sympathy from him. He objected to the reformation of the Inquisition in Spain, whose head he was, and increased its energies against anything tending towards Lutheranism. Cardinal Ægidius in a memorial urged that the Lutheran pest must be rooted out, and Cardinal Soderini warmly supported this counsel. The prospects of a Council were far less in 1523 than when Erasmus made the proposal in 1520. Toleration of error was bad at any time, Adrian VI thought, but it was far worse when the Turks threatened Christendom and the Pope could take no effective action because of the dissensions of the Church. Luther ought not to be tolerated any longer. The revolt against ecclesiastical authority would surely be

¹ *Opp.*, III, p. 826 F., Nov. 20, 1524.

² Erasmus’s letter to Barbirius, April 17, 1523, p. 766. Cf. his letter to N. de la Roche, where he terms the Lutherans “stultos et insanos.”

³ Höfler draws a curious parallel between Leo X and Adrian VI, 114, 280–1, 222. On Adrian’s attitude to the censorship cf. *Reichstagsakten*, XXXVIII, fol. 99–109; Höfler, 279–80.

followed by a throwing off of secular authority : those who had not spared the goods of the Church would not spare the goods of the princes. If it was not possible, reflected the new Pope, to subdue Luther and his disciples by mild means, severe measures must be tried. The cases of Dathan and Abiram and of Ananias and Sapphira were cited. The Germans ought to follow the example of their ancestors at the Council of Constance, when John Hus and Jerome of Prague were put to death.

Punning upon his name, Hus told the Bohemians that though a goose, incapable of lofty flight, cannot break their net, yet there are other birds which, by God's Word and a godly life, mount on high : these shall break their toils in pieces. In the days to come these birds were transformed into a swan. Of course the swan became Luther, and thus the prophecy was fulfilled. Jerome made a definite appeal. "It is certain," he told the Council, "that you will wickedly and maliciously condemn me, although you have found no fault in me. But after my death I will fix in your consciences trouble and remorse ; and I now appeal to the omnipotent God, the high and righteous judge, and challenge you, when a hundred revolving years shall have passed away, to meet me at His bar." Hus was burnt, July 30, 1415, and Jerome May 30, 1416. Little more than a hundred years after, Lutherans and Papists were repeatedly referring to the Council of Constance. Adrian VI was ill-advised to think of such a precedent.

The Pope was animated by the sincerest desire to serve the Church over whose destinies he was unexpectedly called to preside.¹ The pagan aspect of the Renaissance had appealed to Leo X : it made no appeal to him. The reaction was too great to last. In his short pontificate of eighteen months he attested his eagerness to reform the abuses which had honey-combed the ecclesiastical body. His earnestness and ability are transparently present. His sympathy with and his understanding of the Italian temperament are no less transparently absent, and had his pontificate been prolonged it is hard to believe that it would have proved successful. The career of Joseph II is a sufficient guarantee that with statesmen of this order, length of days merely aggravates the degree of failure. Moreover, his best efforts were of necessity directed to meeting the advance of Suleiman I after the fall of Rhodes on December

¹ Baumgarten, II, 1, 228 ; Höfler, 235 ; Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Ref.*, I, 202 ff ; Ranke, 2, 29.

21, 1522. When Adrian ordered a truce between Charles and Francis for the sake of the Turk, Francis burst out with the remark that the real Turk was the clergy.¹ On the tomb of Adrian is the pathetic inscription :

Proh Dolor ! Quantum Refert in Quae
Tempora cuiusque Virtus Incidat.

The time, the opportunity, had indeed changed when the French king confided in the Venetian ambassador on June 24, 1523, his intention to set up an anti-Pope if Adrian persisted in imposing a truce between him and the Emperor.²

The German question never ceased to absorb the mind of Adrian VI. He sent an experienced ambassador, Francesco Chierigato, as nuncio to the Diet of Nürnberg, 1522. In Spain, when Viceroy for Charles, the Pope had come to know him and to trust him. Chierigato pressed the Archduke Ferdinand to carry out the decrees against heresy and to obtain fresh ones, explaining the earnestness of his master in warring against abuses at home and in warring against the Turk abroad. For example, the annates and the fees for the pallium were no longer to go to Rome, but were to remain in Germany to defray the cost of the Turkish contest. The Diet was to ponder over the results of the new teaching, the loosening of all obedience, the permission given to every man to exert his individuality to the fullest. What was the certain effect on men ? "Are they likely," inquired Adrian, "to remain obedient to the laws of the Empire who not merely despise those of the Church, the decrees of the Fathers and Councils, but do not fear to tear them in pieces and burn them to ashes ?" ³

The ex-professor is interested in learning, but he is far more interested in reformation. Was not Erasmus the very man for this work ? As he thought of the connexion of the scholar with Luther he allowed Aleander to draft a stern letter, but on second thoughts he refused to send it.⁴ Instead, he replied on December 1, 1522, to Erasmus, thanking him for his dedication of his edition of Arnobius. The letter indicated that Adrian did not entertain very seriously the accusations brought against his old pupil. Nevertheless, it also indicated that the writer expected deeds, not words. "Rouse thyself, rouse thyself to the defence of the things of God, and go forth to employ in

¹ Sanuto, XXXIV, p. 193.

² Letter of Badoer, June 24, 1523, in Sanuto, XXXIV, p. 289. Cf. the menacing letter Francis wrote to the Pope, MS. Franc., 30002, f. 1-6, Biblio. Nat., Paris.

³ *Reichs.*, III, 399 ff. ; Redlich, p. 97 ff.

⁴ *Cod. Vat.*, 3917, f. 16-7. Cf. Paquier, 290 ff.

His behalf the great gifts of the Spirit thou hast received from Him. Consider how incumbent it is upon us, with God's assistance, to restore to the right path very many of those whom Luther has led astray." Rome was the place for Erasmus.¹ There he would find manuscripts and congenial society: there he could exert himself in defence of the Church. Though Adrian had instructed Chieregato to demand from the Diet the execution of the Edict of Worms and the punishment of four Nürnberg preachers, he knew how much Erasmus abhorred such violence. Therefore he tells him that he preferred the voluntary return of the erring rather than the employment of spiritual and secular penalties. The method is obvious. Let Erasmus wield his persuasive pen against the friends of Luther.²

How well Adrian divined the mind of the scholar is clear from the letter Erasmus wrote to him on December 22, 1523, pointing out the uselessness of measures of suppression and of making literary contests personal. On January 23, 1523, Adrian replied, once more inviting his old pupil to Rome. As a native of the north he eagerly awaits the promised counsel "for he has no stronger desire than to find the right means of removing from the midst of our nation this abominable disease while it is yet curable, not because our dignity and authority, so far as they touch us personally, seem endangered in the storms of the times—for not only have we never set our heart on these honours, but, as they have come to us without any plotting on our behalf, we have greatly dreaded them. God is our witness that we would gladly have declined them altogether had we not thereby feared to offend God and injure our own conscience. We see so many thousands of souls, redeemed by the blood of Christ and committed to our pastoral cares—souls too belonging, after the flesh, to men of our race, led away on the broad path of destruction through the hope of an evangelical freedom which, in reality, is bondage to the devil."

Only part of the answer of Erasmus is preserved. He informs Adrian VI that "I see that it is the pleasure of many that this evil be cured by force, but I fear lest the result may one day show that this was an ill-advised policy: for I see more danger than I would wish lest the matter result in fearful slaughter. I no longer discuss what these parties deserve, but what may help public tranquillity. This evil has spread

¹ Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Ref.*, I, 211; Balan, 292 ff.

² Bauer, *Hadrian VI* (Heidelberg, 1876), 107 ff.; Danz, *Anal. Crit. de Had. VI*, I, 11, Jenæ, 1813 ff.; Hartfelder, 137-43; Höfler, 333 ff.; Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Ref.*, 211 ff., 400; Woker, *De Erasmi studiis irenicis*, 25.

too widely for it to be cured either by amputation or by cauterizing. I admit that formerly among the English the faction of the Wyclifites was checked by the power of the king, but checked rather than extinguished. However, what was lawful in that realm, which wholly depends on the nod of one individual, I know not whether it would be lawful here in so vast a district and divided into so many principalities; certainly if the opinion is established to stamp out this evil by imprisonment, burning, confiscation, exile and death, there would be no need for my help here. I see, however, what a different plan appeals to your merciful nature—to cure evils rather than to punish them. That would not be very difficult if all were of the same mind as you, so that, laying aside private feelings, as you write, they would be willing to take counsel sincerely for the glory of Christ and the safety of Christian people. But if each man is intent on his own private advantage, if theologians demand to have their authority everywhere kept unbroken, if monks allow no diminution of their emoluments, if princes keep a tight grip on all their rights, it would be very difficult to take counsel for the common good. The first thing will be to find out the sources whence this evil springs up again so often; these before all things we must purify. Next after that, it might not be without advantage if exemption from punishment were again held out to those who have erred, owing to persuasion or influence from without, or rather if an amnesty of all previous wrongs, which seems to have happened by a kind of fatality. If God so acts with us from day to day, forgiving all our sins, as often as the sinner deeply laments the same, what forbids the Vicar of God from doing likewise?

“And yet meantime innovations are forced by magistrates and princes, innovations which tend very little to piety and very much to sedition. I would desire, if it is possible, that freedom of producing books should be restrained. Let the hope be held out to the world of changing certain things, with which it complains not without reason that it is oppressed. All shall breathe again the precious name of liberty. We must aim at this by all means, as far as is compatible with the preservation of piety, as far as it is for the purpose of setting in order the consciences of men, but meantime none the less must we consult for the dignity of princes and bishops. But this dignity must be judged by those things wherein the dignity of those persons is centred: in like manner the liberty of the people must also be judged. Your Holiness will say, what are those sources or what are those things which require to be

changed? For the weighing of those matters, I think that men should be called forth from individual districts, men above the suspicion of corruption, men of influence, merciful, enjoying favour, free from bias, whose opinion . . ." Here the letter abruptly ends.¹

The difference between the influence of Erasmus and that of Luther can be measured in this letter. There is a whole world between the man who feels the necessity of reform and one who believes with all his heart that God inspires everything he does. The *De Servo Arbitrio* of Luther and the *Christianæ Religionis Institutio* of Calvin, 1536, are books which changed the face of history. Both volumes are dominated by one idea, the absolute dependence of the soul on God, and they consequently furnished immensely strong impulses to all who accepted the guidance of their authors. What had Erasmus to offer? His cold nature made him and Vives see that learning might cure some of the evils of the day and time might heal the others. Was there anything in this to make men die for the message of the scholar? Erasmus attacked an abuse here and there, but his guiding principle of education was not sufficient to move mankind to the same degree as the dogma of justification by faith. The one was impersonal, the other personal. The one asked for time and patient labour for generations, the other for faith here and now. Man was under the might of God, according to Luther and Calvin, but he was under the might of none else.

The position of Erasmus and Luther in 1523 was not unlike that of the French sceptics of 1759 and the scientists of 1859. In the eighteenth century there were fierce attacks on Christianity. Voltaire lashed it for the Calas case, and he had a large following. His attacks were, however, guided by no widespread principle, and the result was that all the assaults were doomed to failure. After the publication of *The Origin of Species* there was the principle of evolution, which most scientists accept as a working hypothesis and some of them as a great deal more. The failure of 1759 and the comparative success of 1859 attest the importance of possessing a dogma which commands enthusiastic acceptance.

On September 16, 1523, Erasmus wrote a letter to Adrian's sacristan, Peter Barbier, which is most orthodox in tone. The humanist sees that both sides insist on his taking action, and he is as unwilling as Leo X or Clement VII to make the plunge.²

¹ Written at Bâle to Adrian VI, Feb. 23, 1523, *Epist.* dcxlix, 748 A.

² Printed in Nollhac, p. 112.

The successor of Adrian VI was another Medici, Clement VII, and he proved as disastrous to the Papacy from one point of view as Leo X proved from another. Clement VII and Leo X were generous patrons of art and architecture, of learning in general and humanism in particular. Both were clever and tactful, indefatigable and unscrupulous, attentive to the details of divine worship. Both were politicians first and popes afterwards: both loved their possessions and their families more than they loved the Church. Clement VII indeed possessed more good qualities than his Medici predecessor, for he was both temperate and pious. The trouble was that Clement was unable to make up his mind, or rather when he made up what he considered his mind he was unable to carry it out. The curse of Reuben was upon him. Men said that Leo X was hesitating, but he was a rock of stability when compared with Clement. Men said that Leo X sailed forth to meet the Lutheran crisis with two compasses: Clement VII sailed forth with an endless variety of compasses. The new pope so persistently veered, from one point to another, that none, friend or enemy, ever knew what his policy for the moment was.

Erasmus greeted Clement on his election with a courteous letter, apologizing for the tone of his early writings on the ground that he could not then foresee the fierce outbreak of religious dissension. At the same time he sent him a copy of his *Paraphrases of the Acts of the Apostles*, a book which, if Clement had examined it, was not precisely reassuring. Clement replied in the same courteous manner on April 3, 1524, sending the scholar a present of two hundred golden gulden, and exhorting him to place his talents at the service of the Church. He assured him that his enemies would be silenced.¹ He gave practical proof of his goodwill by ordering the Spanish adversaries of Erasmus to hold their peace.² The scholar's defence of the freedom of the will won his heart.

Once more it occurs to the man of learning that a blow at the central position of the reformer would assist the cause he has at heart more than anything else. Therefore he sends to Henry VIII the first draft of his treatise *De Libero Arbitrio* against the determinism of Luther. It is not yet completed in consequence of his ill-health and bodily pains. If His Majesty likes the work, he will complete it, and get it printed elsewhere. No printer here (i.e. at Bâle) would dare print

¹ *Opp.*, III, I, 783, VII, 651 ff.; Balan, *Mon. ref.*, 334, and *Mon. sæc.*, XVI, 10 ff., 12 ff.; Hartfelder, 148.

² Bucholtz, I, 469; Nuntiati., I, 138-9.

anything which contains the least reflection on Luther, but every one may write what he likes against the Pope.¹ Strangely enough, this very year appeared a curious popular picture representing Erasmus hugging a fox's tail decorated with the emblems of the Papacy.² During the month of September he wrote to Cardinal Wolsey, Archbishop Warham, Bishop Fisher, and Bishop Tunstall. To the Cardinal he says that in compliance with his and the King's advice he has finished his book *De Libero Arbitrio*—a bold act as Germany now stands. He has not prefixed any dedication to it in order to avoid calumny: otherwise he would have dedicated it to Wolsey or the Pope.³ To the Archbishop he analyses the three sets of his enemies: the scholars at Rome, who do not care for theology, monks and others, and, worse than all, the Lutherans. He is glad that he has completed the Epistles of St. Jerome.⁴ To the Bishop he speaks of his numerous enemies and the extension of Luther's doctrines in Savoy, Lorraine, France, and even Milan. He had resolved to abstain from controversy and employ himself on classical studies, but is compelled to put together some remarks on preaching.⁵ Lastly, he informs Tunstall that he has published his book on free will. He would like to have his correspondent's opinion of it. He cannot get a copy of John Damascenus. He does not care to move from Bâle. If he did so, the Lutherans would say that he had done so through fear.⁶

In the meantime Luther was busily engaged in working out the relations of his party to the State, and the position he arrived at was at once the strength and the weakness of his movement. His work, *On the secular power: How far obedience is due to it*,⁷ appeared in March 1523. In the appeal *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation on the Improvement*

¹ *Epist.*, p. 774 (1523).

² *Gesprech büchlin von eynen Bawern, Beliackl, Erasmo Roterdamo und Doctor Johann Fabri, Kürzlich die Wahrheyt anzlygend, was Erasmus und Fabrum zu Verleugnung des Gots Worts bewegt hat*, 1523.

³ Erasmus's letter to Wolsey, Sept. 2, 1524, *Epist.*, p. 810, XVIII, 52.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Warham, Sept. 4, 1524, *Epist.*, p. 813.

⁵ Erasmus's letter to Fisher, Sept. 4, 1524, *Epist.*, p. 814, XVIII, 47.

⁶ Erasmus's letter to Tunstall, Sept. 4, 1524, *Epist.*, p. 813, XVIII, 48.

⁷ *Von weltlicher Ueberkeytt wie weytl man yhr Gehorsam schuldig sey*, Werke, Weim. ed., II, pp. 229 (245–8); Erl. ed., 22, pp. 60–105. Cited by Castellion in his *De hæreticis* (Magdeburg, 1554), 29–45. Cf. also E. Brandenburg, *Luther's Anschauung vom Staate u. der Gesellschaft*, 25; H. Hermelink, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* (29, 1908), 267 ff., 479 ff.; Luthardt, *Luther's Ethik*, 2, 81 ff.; Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, 12, 209; Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), 2, 23 f., 249, 254, 262, 269, 281 f., 299; Werke, Erl. ed., 22, 59 ff., 68, 82, 85, 89–90, 93; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 600 ff., 604.

of the *Christian Estate*, he had certainly elevated the civil power to ecclesiastical rank. The new book flatly contradicts this standpoint. The task of the State is conceived to be secular : it has no duty to make men pious, for *laissez-faire* is its proper attitude in these high matters. It is a position strikingly like the Gallican one. The Gallican doctors admit that the Church has coercive power, even in the external forum ; but this constraint is supernatural and moral.¹ Can there be such a thing as a Christian State, asks Luther ? No, for God calls such a body into existence on account of the wicked.² The world through sin was estranged from God. The prince therefore simply had to maintain order by force when peace was disturbed or men suffered injustice. The State is in itself a moral organism outside and apart from the Church, a view which was one day to effect weighty results. Real Christians require no secular rulers. To Stoics like Posidonius and Seneca, to Fathers like St. Austin and Gregory the Great, it was possible to conceive the State without coercive power. Though William of Occam conferred such power on the State, yet in his *Dialogus*, Marsiglio of Padua in his *Defensor Pacis* and Jacques Almain in his *Expositio . . . super potestate summi pontificis*, 1512, grant that "He who has supreme control in temporal matters must only govern in the temporal : he who holds it in spiritual must not meddle with public matters."³ Such a theory, working in practice, would have excluded the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the devilries of Alva, and those wrought in France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Luther's *Von weltlicher Obrigkeit* speaks most plainly in favour of toleration ; it reaches a loftiness of thought as penetrating as that of *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, and this loftiness was not approached to the days of Milton's *Areopagitica*, one hundred and twenty-one years later. The great revolutionary believes that "no one can command or ought to command the soul, except God, who only can show it the way to heaven." He puts forth the plea that "the thoughts and mind of man are discerned only by God," and hence it is useless and impossible to command or by force to compel any man's belief. The conclusion is inevitable. "Faith is a voluntary matter which cannot be forced : indeed it is a divine work in the spirit. Hence it is a common saying which is also found in Augustine : 'Faith cannot and ought not to be forced on any one.'"

¹ Almain, *Expositio*, III, c. 18, p. 1113.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 21, p. 285.

³ Almain, *Expositio*, I, c. 7.

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Some, however, adduce the argument that the aid of the State ought to be invoked, especially to prevent heretics from leading the people astray. They quote passages like Romans xiii. 1: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." It is also material to their point of view that St. Peter says, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto the governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well."¹ In spite of his leaning to St. Paul, Luther boldly places the last quotation alongside the sayings of Jesus Christ, applying Matthew xx. 21, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." It "is the duty of bishops, not of princes. For heresy can never be kept off by force; another argument is required for that; this is another quarrel than that of the sword. If this fails, the worldly power avails naught, though it fill the world with blood. Heresy is a spiritual matter that cannot be hewn down by iron, not burned by fire, nor drowned by water. But God's Word meets it, as Paul says, 'Our weapons are not carnal, but mighty in God' (2 Cor. x. 4-5)."

In the same year as the publication of the *Von weltlicher Obrigkeit* Luther sent forth his exposition of the First Epistle of St. Peter.² On the exhortation to fear God and honour the King, he remarks, "If the civil magistrate interferes with spiritual matters of conscience in which God only must rule, we ought not to obey at all, but rather lose our head. Civil government is confined to external and temporal affairs." He powerfully urges, "If an emperor or prince asked me about my faith, I would reply, not because of his command, but because of my duty to confess my faith before men. But if he should go further, and command me to believe this or that, I would answer, 'Dear sir, mind your secular business: you have no right to interfere with God's reign, and therefore I shall not obey you at all.'"

There is a similar standpoint advanced by Hooper, in 1548, in his *Declaration of the Ten Holy Commandments of Almighty God*. He points out: "As touching the superior powers of the earth, it is not unknown unto all them that hath readen and marked the scripture, that it appertaineth nothing unto

¹ 1 Peter ii. 13-4.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 14, 1 (13)-9; Erl. ed., 52, 213-87.

their office to make any law to govern the conscience of their subjects in religion, but to reign over them in this case as the word of God commandeth. Deut. xvii. 1; 1 Sam. xii; 2 Chron. viii; Wisd. vi.”¹ Robert Browne, in his *Treatise of Reform*, published in 1582, enunciated the same views on the relations between the secular power and the Church.

The political philosopher arrives at principles which were utterly at variance with those he employed in his dealings during the year 1522, and indeed other years. The orthodox inhabitants, for instance, of Eilenburg, Altenburg, Schwarzburg and Wittenberg were conversant with the Lutheran conception that the State had the right to dictate a creed to its subjects. They would have been surprised to learn less than a year after they had endured persecution that though the State exists by God’s will and institution, yet it has no concern with spiritual matters. They might, however, have entertained a shrewd suspicion that the implication of this thesis was that no difficulties were to be placed in the path of the preaching of the Word. Has the State the right to forbid the circulation of books delivering the new message? Has it the capacity of excommunication? Can it hinder the new worship? To all these questions the philosopher has a reasonable answer grounded on principle, the principle of the non-interference of the State in all religious affairs: temporal rulers are to prevent outward crimes and maintain outward peace as “God’s task-masters and executioners.”² It is indeed a humble position for the territorial prince to be allotted, compared with the dreams of boundless authority he was about to claim. There is more method in the design of the author than might appear, for he was forced to consider what the Elector Frederick and other sovereigns would think of his proposals. He wished them to get rid of the notion that a Lutheran was an embryo rebel. Did not Charles V and his princes fear that in the near future a struggle with the adherents of the new faith was probable? *On the Secular Power*, then, is a *livre de circonstance*. If the author, like Cavour, had all the imprudences of a statesman, he also had the prudences. Now he only asks of the State

¹ *Early Writings of Bishop Hooper*, Parker Society, 280. Cf. his *Epistola ad Episcopos, Decanos, Archidiaconos, et ceteros Cleri Ordinis, in Synodo Londinensi congregatos in 1559*; *Later Writings of Bishop Hooper*, 386: “Profecto Christus non ignem, non gladium, non carceres, non vincula, non violentiam, non confiscationem bonorum, non regineæ majestatis terrorem, media organa constituit quibus veritas sui verbi mundi promulgaretur; sed miti ac diligenti prædicatione evangelii sui mundum ab errore et idololatria converti præcepit.”

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 268; Erl. ed., 22, p. 89.

what Diogenes asked of Alexander—keep out of my sunshine.

There had been memoranda on the question of armed resistance drawn up by Luther for the instruction of his Elector Frederick. For instance, on February 8, 1523, he drew the attention of his prince to the fact that publicly he had hitherto preserved an attitude of neutrality in religious questions, and had merely given out that as a layman he was waiting for the triumph of the truth.¹ Hence it was necessary that he should declare himself for the justice of Luther's cause, if he intended to abandon his attitude of submission to the imperial authority. Then he might have recourse to arms as a stranger who comes to the rescue, but not as a sovereign of the Holy Roman Empire. In short, "he must do this only at the call of a singular spirit and faith, otherwise he must give way to the sword of the higher power and die with his Christians." A man who was called The Wise was not likely to listen to such a mystic summons. Should he be attacked, not by the Emperor but by the Catholic princes, then, after attempting to bring about peace, he must repel force by force. This was not consistent with his book of the next month, but is consistency a virtue, especially in time of revolution? Luther did not think it was.

In *The Freedom of a Christian Man* he had been eager to show that the sphere of religion and that of the world cannot be divided except at the price of injuring both. That unity he now flung to the winds. In 1523 he is no less eager to maintain the division of the human race into two classes, one belonging to the kingdom of God and the other belonging to the kingdom of the world. To the first class belong all true believers in Christ and under Christ, for Christ is King and Lord in the kingdom of God. These people require no worldly sword or law, thus anticipating the teaching of Roger Williams by 120 years, and that of Locke by more than 160. If the world were composed of true Christians, it would require no prince, king, or lord, no sword or law, for they have the Holy God in their hearts. They suffer wrong gladly and themselves do wrong to none.² There is no need of quarrel or contention, and there is no need of court or punishment. There are emphatically two kingdoms of men. He completely departs—for the moment, at least—from the mediæval theory of the identity of Church and State in one society, for now he is

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 4, p. 76 ff.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 14², p. 281; *Sämmtl. Werke*, 64, p. 278.

convinced that the secular power—he is particularly thinking of the lands where it is Catholic—cannot exercise any authority in spiritual matters. Even the *De Monarchia* of Dante and the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsiglio are far from his thoughts. In his mind the citizenship in the secular State bulks smaller than the mystic fellowship in the *Civitas Dei*, the city of God. Hence he says: “These two governments must be carefully kept asunder, and both be preserved, the one to render men pious, the other to safeguard outward peace and prevent evil deeds.”¹ What he called spiritual government was entirely voluntary, as voluntary as the State Herbert Spencer desired. It was, for example, “without command,” possessing only “the inward sovereignty of the Word.” It was “Christ’s spiritual dominion” where souls obey the evangel. “Christians do all what is good without compulsion, and God’s Word suffices them.”² Melancthon agreed with Luther that the power to make and enforce laws in this world belongs only to the secular arm. To it he transfers most of the prerogatives belonging in the Middle Ages to the Church. From Luther and Melancthon to Hooker, from this standpoint, the transition is not difficult. “Priests and bishops” have neither “supremacy nor power”³: the “godly prince” has both, for he is the only omnipotent being in his own land.

How can true believers be under the law or the sword? ⁴ Does not Christ command them not to use the sword and to refrain from violence? “The words of Christ are clear and peremptory: ‘resist not evil.’ These words and the whole passage concerning the blow on the cheek, the Sophists (i.e. the Schoolmen) had indeed interpreted as a mere counsel. In reality, however, they constitute a command, though only for Christians.”⁵ He points out to Duke John, the Elector’s brother, who sympathized with him and to whom he dedicated this book, that the sword has no place among Christians. “Hence you cannot use it on or among Christians, since they need it not.”⁶ Nevertheless, he proceeds to tell him that even the Christian ruler must not lay aside the sword because there are few such Christians. Therefore the sword is still “useful

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 69. Cf. *Auslegung des Johannes-Evangeliums*, Erl. ed., 50, p. 349 ff.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 94.

³ *Ibid.*, 22, p. 93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 22, p. 69.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 259; Erl. ed., 22, p. 78.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 72. Cf. the important *Auslegung des 101 Psalms*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 330.

and necessary everywhere." His old peasant sense obliges him to see that "the world cannot and will not do without" authority or force, call it what you will. In his own case the faithful man adheres literally to Christ's word, "so that you would gladly offer the other cheek to the smiter and give up your cloak after your coat if the matter affected yourself or your cause."¹ The individual must "allow himself to be insulted and disgraced," though in his neighbour's cause he must insist on justice even if he has recourse to the sword of authority.

The faithful, in the author's conception, formed merely a union of souls without any spiritual authority. Necessarily there was only one body competent to issue commands, and that was the State. Among true believers the sword is quite out of place. "You cannot make use of it on or among Christians who have no need of it," though the world cannot do without it.² "Christians can be governed by nothing but the word of God. For Christians must be ruled by faith, not by outward works. . . . Those who do not believe are not Christians, nor do they belong to the kingdom of Christ, but to the kingdom of the world. Hence they must be coerced, and driven with the sword and by the outward government. Christians do everything that is good of their own accord and without being compelled and God's Word is enough for them."³ It is wrong for Christians to sentence men to death, for such measures savour of the devil. "Whoever is under the secular rule," he announces in a sermon in his *Church Homilies*, "is still far from the kingdom of heaven, for the place where all this belongs is hell; for instance, the prince who governs his people in such a way as to allow none to suffer injustice and no evildoer to go unrequited, does well and receives praise. . . . Nevertheless, as explained above, this is not appointed for those who belong to the kingdom of heaven but merely in order that people may not sink yet deeper into hell, and make things worse. Therefore no one who is under the secular government can boast that he is acting rightly before God; in His sight it is still all wrong."⁴

The conclusion is obvious. With such a negative view of the functions of the State it is clear that the Bible stands apart

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 73.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 255; Erl. ed., 22, pp. 66 and 73; Erl. ed., 24², p. 291. Cf. *Ein Sendbrief vom Büchlein wider die Bauern*, Erl. ed., 24², p. 318.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 271; Erl. ed., 22, p. 94.

⁴ Cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 307; Erl. ed., 14², p. 281.

from the institutions of the Government. The work of the theologian is not to uphold a dynasty but to set forth the work of Christ; his kingdom is emphatically not one of this world.¹ Decrees and ordinances there must be: these, and indeed all legal institutions, come from the law of nature.²

The author's language must have been a shock to Duke John or Duke George!³ He denounces not only the "clever squires who seek to uproot heresy," but also "our Christian princes who defend the faith." The secular authorities, "instead of allowing God's Word to have free course," impose the orthodox creed on their subjects, thus creating "liars by compulsion." They act "without the clear Word of God": they "command men to feel with the Pope." Naturally they perish in their "perverted understanding."⁴ In the dedication he claims to be the first to teach "the princes and secular authorities to remain Christians with Christ as their Lord, and yet not to make mere counsels out of Christ's commands." The Sophists, however, "have made a liar of Christ, and placed Him in the wrong in order that the princes may be honoured. . . . Their poisonous order has made its way throughout the world, so that every one looks upon Christ's teaching as counsels for the perfect, and not as obligatory commands, binding on all." The book was a *livre de circonstance*. There was permanent matter in it. The writer never shook himself free from the doctrine of the supremacy of the princely power and the consequent abrogation of the spiritual government. Thus in his *Instructions for Visitations*, 1528, and in the *Instruction* itself the visitors have no public authority to hold the visitation. They must be conversant with the Bible, and they must find therein their qualifications. They are appointed by the Elector, who alone exercises force or compulsion. As they represent him, they share in his secular power. "It is part of the duty of the authorities" to "establish and regulate the matrimonial courts." If the work of the pastor has been a failure, the civil power employs its "own means for the spiritual and temporal protection of the Christianity of the country against scandal and false doctrine." The Bible is the sole code. For the spiritual government consists exclusively "in the Word and preaching office, and can only penetrate into the heart by means

¹ *Antwort von der Gegenwehr*, Erl. ed., 64, p. 265.

² Cf. E. Ehrhardt, *La notion du droit naturel chez Luther*, pp. 290-6, 316 ff.

³ Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), 2, 164 f., 285 f., 299, 305, 308, 316; 6, 37-41; Seckendorf, 1, 261; Kolde, *Friedrich d. Weise*, 50 ff.; Seidemann, *Erläuterungen z. Reform.-Geschichte*, 59 ff.

⁴ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 22, pp. 83-6, 88, 89, 91-3.

of the Word and the work of the pastor." The sub-title of the book proposes to solve the problem of the extent of obedience to the secular arm. If it exceed its limits and the rulers demand what is against the conscience, then God is to be obeyed rather than man.¹

If the civil powers prescribe forms of belief, order the confiscation of books, they are not to be obeyed and they are not to be resisted. "Should they therefore seize your property and punish you for disobedience, you should esteem yourself happy and thank God."² In the margravate of Meissen and in the March, the rulers required under penalties the surrender of the Lutheran translation of the New Testament, but "the subjects are not to give up a single leaflet, nor even a letter, for whoever does such a thing gives up Christ into the hands of Herod."

The writer's own position forced him to take a deep interest in his thesis that the secular authorities have no right to interfere in doctrinal questions. For almost two years he had been under the ban of the Empire, an impossible position if he could carry conviction to Duke John and other rulers. "God," he holds, "will permit none to rule over the soul but He Himself alone. . . . Hence when the secular power takes upon itself to make laws for the soul, it is trespassing upon God's domain and merely seducing and corrupting souls. We are determined to make this so plain that every one can grasp it, and that our squires, princes and bishops may see what fools they are when with laws and commandments they try to force the people to believe this or that."³

In accordance with *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, he teaches that "True is the proverb, 'Thoughts are free of taxes.' " "It is a vain and impossible task" to compel the heart.⁴ The soul is "placed in the hands of God alone." How can man have power over it? The ruler has just as little control over the soul as he has over the moon. "Faith is a voluntary act to which no one can be forced, nay it is a divine work of the Spirit." "Every man's salvation depends on his belief, and he must accordingly look to it that he believes aright." His thesis is proved. "The secular power must be content to wait and allow people to believe this or that as they please and are able, and not compel any man by force."⁵ "Heresy can never be withstood by force. . . . Something else is needed.

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 87 ff.

² *Ibid.*, 22, p. 89.

³ *Ibid.*, 22, p. 82.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 84 ff. Cf. 24, p. 139 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 22, p. 85.

. . . God's word must here do the work, and, if it fails, then the secular power will certainly not achieve it, though it should fill the world with blood."

Still the unrighteous require the law to teach, constrain, and compel them to do right. It is for them the law is given. Christ rules without law, solely through the Spirit, but worldly government keeps peace with the sword. Nevertheless, it is the right of the bishops to restrain heretics. Along with this opinion he was also able to think that there was no longer a Church able to direct men heavenwards without danger of error.¹ He believed so firmly and so unwaveringly in the mystical conception of the Invisible Church that he was able to exclude the Visible Church from all connexion with the State. It is noteworthy that in his translation of the Bible he constantly uses the word "congregation" instead of "Church." An ecclesiastical organization he could not describe: the State he could. He can analyse the duties of the prince in a tone and temper not unworthy of comparison with the *Institutio Principis Christiani* of Erasmus. The Christian prince must, for example, above all "lay aside the notion that he is to rule and govern by violence." As Erasmus urged the reform of all universities, so Luther urges the reform of the German universities. The motives of the two men differ fundamentally. Luther's strong desire for a change is that the blind heathen master Aristotle reigned in the schools more than Christ. The Lutheran State is one in which justice is done, but the whole conception is poor compared with the Erasmian. The Latin world had made a sharp distinction between secular and sacred, which Luther now also made. Had he persisted in this distinction, he could not contribute what he did in paving the way for that high theory of the State to which Hegel gave new life.

There is an after-history to *Von weltlicher Oberkeyt* in Switzerland. There Sebastian Castellion, under the name of Martin Bellius, published in 1554 his plea in favour of toleration, entitled *Traicte des Hérétiques*. Castellion's object is twofold. He seeks answers to two questions. One is, What is a heretic? The other is, How must we treat him? Here are the names he invokes, and they are a strange medley, on behalf of his thesis: Luther, Brenz, Erasmus, Sebastian Franck, Lactantius, Caspar Hedio, John Agricola, Jakob Schenk, Christoph Hofman, John Calvin, Otto Brunfels, Conrad Pellican, Urbanus Rhegius, St. Austin, St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome, Cælius Secundus

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 268 ff; Erl. ed., 22, p. 90.

Curio, Sebastian Castellion, Georg Kleinberg, and Basil Montfort.

The passage Castellion quotes from Luther is taken from *Von weltlicher Oberkeyt*. The doctrines of the two domains, the kingdom of God under Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of the world under the magistrate, were calculated to allow the existence of toleration—when each authority may not trespass on the field of the other. Castellion is not content with such an argument in his favour: he proceeds in his noteworthy book to quote from Luther's sermon on the tares and the wheat, which obviously proclaims the difficulty and the danger of detecting the heretic.¹

Castellion makes use of two works of Erasmus, the first is the work he wrote in 1526 against the Sorbonne, entitled *Supputatio errorum Bedæ*.² It substantially develops the same conception of the Church and the State as the *Von weltlicher Oberkeyt*, for Erasmus draws a distinction between the ecclesiastical and secular pains and penalties. "Is this to disarm the Church?" Erasmus asks indignantly, and he answers his own question, "Dare I (remove) from the bishops their authority to teach, correct and excommunicate? What right have they beyond these functions? What laws of the Church are they of which I am reminded in this connexion? Is a bishop one who only knows how to bind, throttle, torment—burn?" The passage attracted the attention of the Sorbonne, notably of Beda, who passionately attacked it, and in 1527, the hostile sentences of this body were promulgated,³ condemning certain opinions as heretical.⁴

On November 4, 1529, Erasmus wrote a *Letter to the would-be*

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., II, pp. 80–3.

² Proposition 32.

³ *Determinatio Facultatis super quam plurimis assertionibus D. Erasmi Roterdami.*

⁴ (1) Servi qui volunt ante tempus colligere zizania sunt ii qui pseud-apostolos et hæresia chas gladiis et mortibus existimant e medio tollendos, cum paterfamilias nolit eos extingui, sed tolerari . . . quod si non respiciant serventur suo judici, cui dabunt poenas aliquando (From Erasmus's *Commentaries on St. Matthew's Gospel*, ch. xiii).

(2) Ego principes ad trucidandos hæreticos nec hortor nec dehortor: quid sacerdotalis sit officii demonstro (This and the following five are taken from *Supp. err. Bedæ*).

(3) Quis unquam audivit orthodoxos episcopos concitasse reges ad trucidandos hæreticos qui nihil aliud essent quam hæretici?

(4) Docet Augustinus ferendos hæreticos donec citra gravem Ecclesiæ concussionem possint tolli Augustinus intelligit a communione separari.

(5) Per Evangelium vitari jubentur hæretici, non exuri.

(6) An leges Ecclesiæ sunt quempiam ultricibus tradere flammis?

(7) Veteribus episcopis ultima poena erat anathema.

(8) Quærentur articuli partim falsi, partim depravati.

Evangelists, protesting that he does not take from the prince the power of the sword that Christ and the Apostles had recognized. There is room for severity against two grave heresies, where they assume a blasphemous character—it is his usual limitation on toleration—and where they take a seditious form.¹ Still he maintains in his *Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiæ vulgatas sub nomine Facultatis theologiæ Parisiensis*, that in spite of the Sorbonne his interpretation of the parable of the tares and the wheat is true. Castellion does not quote from this document, but he takes his second excerpt from the *Apologia adversus articulos aliquot per monachos quosdam in Hispania exhibitos*.²

The account of the Church in Luther's book *On the Secular Power* may be supplemented from the addresses of the indefatigable prophet during the year of its publication. On Maundy Thursday he preached in Wittenberg for the first time on his plan of separating the faithful from the common herd. He was then publishing a new rule making penance, or a general confession of sin, a condition of receiving the Supper. In future none but true Christians were to partake: there was a preliminary examination in faith. About Easter, 1523, appeared *Das eyn Christliche Versamlung odder Gemeyne Recht und Macht habe alle Lere zu urteylen*. It lays down that it is the congregation, not the bishops or the learned or the councils, who have the right and duty of judging the preacher and of choosing a successor if he does not proclaim the evangel, regardless of the rights of church patronage. In writing to the magistrates and congregation at Prague, *De instituendis ministris ecclesiæ*,³ November 1523, he tried, without great success, to show that everywhere the members of the congregation were to elect faithful pastors.⁴ In time the clergy were to choose the Visitors and the Archbishop. The flock "will indeed be weak and sinful," but, "seeing they have the Word, they are at least not ungodly."⁵

Luther could not expect that Erasmus would approve of his conception of the relations or rather want of relations between Church and State. The rift between the two was

¹ Cf. his letter to Duke George of Saxony, Dec. 12, 1524: "Æquum non est ut quivis error igni puniatur nisi accedat seditio aut aliud crimen quod leges capite puniunt. . . . Magnopere vereor ne vulgaribus istis remediis hoc est palinodiis, carceribus et incendiis malum nihil aliud quam exasperetur."

² *Opp.*, IX, col. 1054 D, 1057 D and 1058 A.

³ It was translated immediately into German, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 12, p. 169 ff.; Erl. ed., 6, p. 449 ff.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 12, p. 192; Erl. ed., 6, p. 528.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 12, p. 194; Erl. ed., 6, p. 532.

deepening. Melanchthon had considered himself as a simple soldier under the standards of the humanist general, and when he became the warm friend of Luther there was nothing he desired more ardently than an agreement between his master and his friend. "Martin Luther," he told the humanist, "is your convinced admirer and desires your full approbation."¹ Martin Bucer wrote to Beatus Rhenanus, after an interview with Luther, that the latter was entirely in agreement with Erasmus save that he proclaimed freely what Erasmus merely insinuated.² Eoban of Hesse, a fanatical admirer of Erasmus and Luther, thought he rendered homage to his two divinities by publicly explaining that he considered the *Manual for the Christian Soldier* the catechism of the Reformation. The scholar, it was believed, was the only obstacle to the destruction of Luther.³ In 1520 Bucentes declared that Luther was a pest, but Erasmus was a greater one, for it was from the breasts of Erasmus that Luther sucked his poison.

In the eyes of Aleander, Reuchlinians, Erasmians and Lutherans were all in the same category.⁴ He persuaded the Prince of Carpi to think that "either Luther seems to Erasmianize or Erasmus to Lutherize." Aleander maintained that "Erasmus has written worse things than Luther," believing that Erasmus had preached a real intellectual revolt in Flanders and the Rhinelands.⁵ One of the margraves, at a banquet at the court of Bohemia, declared that Erasmus and Luther were in perfect agreement.⁶ Luther was fond of saying that he merely spoke out plainly what Erasmus in his timidity only ventured to hint at. According to the reformer "Erasmus has fulfilled his mission: he has revived the study of the classical languages and recalled men from sacred studies. Perhaps, like Moses, he will die in the plains of Moab. He has shown the evil, which is enough: but I perceive he can neither show the good nor lead us into the Promised Land."⁷ More dangerous still, Hutten strove to demonstrate in his *Expostulation* that, before the appearance of Luther, Erasmus was the sole hope of true Christians. Vainly Erasmus protests

¹ Melanchthon to Erasmus, Jan. 5, 1519, Melanchth., *Op.*

² Martin Bucer to Beatus Rhenanus, May 1, 1518 (B. Rhenanus, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Horawitz and Hartfelder).

³ Erasmus to Justus Jonas, Nov. 11, 1520, Le Clerc.

⁴ Aleander to the Vice-Chancellor, Jan. 14, 1521 (Balan, *Monumenta reformationis lutheranæ ex tabulariis S. Sedis secretis*, 1521-25).

⁵ Cf. Aleander's account in Balan, p. 100.

⁶ Piso to Erasmus, May 7, 1522; Förstemann and Günther, *Briefe an Desid. Erasmus von Rotterdam*.

⁷ Luther to Ecolampadius, June 20, 1523, *Briefwechsel*, 4, p. 164.

that he is not responsible for the borrowings made from his writings, and that he has neither desired nor foreseen the course events are taking. The more he protests the more suspicions are confirmed. Nicholas of Egmond prays God, after the example of St. Paul, to transform Luther and Erasmus, the two persecutors of the Church, into apostles of truth.¹ His opponents endeavour to persuade Charles V that Erasmus is "the source and head of all the Lutheran heresy."² The humanist tells Mountjoy that he is not the author of any of the Lutheran writings attributed to him.³

A characteristic allegory represents Luther and Hutten "bearing a box surmounted by two chalices with the following inscription: 'Arch of the true faith.' Erasmus precedes them singing and playing on the harp like David; John Hus follows. . . . In another corner of the tableau we see the Pope and his cardinals surrounded with the halberdiers of the guard."⁴ Ulrich von Hutten, scion of a knightly Franconian family, had led the life of a wandering student, going from one University to another in North and South Germany, and in Italy. Liberty was the ideal which this forerunner of Lessing set before him early in life, and to this ideal, in days of poverty and prosperity, he always clung. In Erasmus he believed he saw a kindred spirit. Therefore he addressed the scholar as the German Socrates, who was no less anxious for the education of the German people than Socrates had been for the Greeks. He maintained that he should cleave to him as faithfully as Alcibiades had to Socrates.⁵ In the Reuchlin controversy Hutten organized public opinion outside the universities on the side of the scholar, and Crotus Rubianus and he published the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, which satirized so savagely the attitude of the average thinker. Erasmus, in spite of his sympathy with the object, did not relish its tone,⁶ and Hutten observed that "Erasmus is a man for himself."⁷ His national feelings gave him sympathies with Luther, which made him anti-

¹ Erasmus's letter to Gottschalk Rosemond, 1519, 536 E.

² Erasmus's letter to Pirkheimer, March 30, 1522, 708 D.

³ *Epist.*, XVII, 26.

⁴ Aleander's letter to the Vice-Chancellor, Feb. 28, 1521, Balan.

⁵ *Opp.*, III, p. 1573; *App.*, Ep. 86. Its date is Oct. 1515. Cf. Strauss, I, p. 156 note; T. Kolde, *Luther's Stellung zu Konzil u. Kirche*, 69; Evers, 3, 436-81.

⁶ Cf. Erasmus's letter to Melancthon, *Corp. Reform.*, I, 667; Drummond, *Erasmus*, II, 146, 158; Egli, 245, No. 565; Strauss, II, 263-5, 293-4.

⁷ Cf. Hagen, III, 60, 63-72; Kampschulte, II, 191; Strauss, II, 250, 281-8, 311-2, 331-2. The whole of the tenth chapter, vol. ii, of Strauss's charming biography of Ulrich von Hutten deserves careful attention. Hutten has been as fortunate in his biographer as in his editor, Böcking.

Roman, and in 1519 appeared his epigrammatic dialogue *Vadiscus*, which inveighs bitterly against the exactions of Rome. Standish and Lee entirely share the attitude depicted in the tableau, so far as it concerned Luther and Hutten. The pamphleteers of the years 1520, 1521 and 1523 associate the names of Erasmus and Luther.

Albrecht Dürer of Nürnberg and Martin Luther are not two names often coupled together, yet both felt that there were too many ceremonies in religion and too much greediness in the monks. To Spalatin the painter expressed his eager hopes. "God grant that I may meet with Dr. Martin Luther, for I will then make a careful sketch of him and engrave it in copper, so that the memory of that Christian may long be preserved, for he has helped me out of much anxiety." In Holland he heard the rumour of the capture and disappearance of the prophet after the Diet of Worms. There is only one man living to take his place. At once he summons Erasmus to undertake the reform of the Church. "O Erasmus of Rotterdam, why hangest thou back? See what is the power of the unjust tyranny of the time. Listen, O Christian knight, ride forth by the side of the Lord Jesus, defend the cause of truth, gain the crown of the martyrs. Are you not now an old man? . . . Then the gates of hell, the Roman See, shall, as Christ says, not prevail against thee. O Erasmus, put thyself in the forefront that God may praise thee, as it is written of David, for you can do it; yea, assuredly thou canst overthrow Goliath . . . for God is on the side of the holy Christian Churches." And he ends prophetically, "Await the completing of the number of those who have been slain innocently, and then I will judge."¹

"O God," Dürer exclaims, "if Luther is dead, who will henceforth expound the Holy Gospel to us so clearly? What would he not have written for us in ten or twenty years?" "Never has any one written more clearly during the last one hundred and forty years, never has God given any one so evangelical a spirit." "Every one who reads Dr. Martin Luther's books sees that it is the Gospel which he upholds. Hence they must be held sacred and not to be burnt."

Different as the natures of Albrecht Dürer and Wilibald Pirkheimer were, they were sympathetic to the new teaching and the new knowledge of their day. In particular they were

¹ A. Dürer, *Schriftlicher Nachlass*, ed. Lange and Fucher, p. 161 ff. Cf. Thausing, *Dürer's Briefe und Tagebücher*, pp. 119-22; Dürer, *Tagebuch* (Leitschuh), 82 ff.; Waltz, 39.

powerfully attracted to the study of mathematics and astronomy, and in the latter subject they had before them the writings of three such Germans as Cardinal Nicholas Krebs, named Cusanus, from Cues near Treves; of Regiomontanus and of Georg Peurbach, the most eminent astronomer of his time. Long before Nicholas Copernicus, Cusanus demonstrated the fact of the earth's motion and its rotation on its axis. Regiomontanus and Peurbach were true scientific observers and calculators. The former wrote a work on the planets which the latter edited: it fell into the hands of Copernicus, inducing him to devote his life to astronomy. What they failed to achieve through their own labours they achieved through the labours of another. Indeed, this is a characteristic of their work. In his factory at Nürnberg Regiomontanus produced astronomical instruments, globes, compasses and maps. Nürnberg sea-compasses were among the most famous in Europe, rivalling the reputation of its maps. Regiomontanus improved the astrolabe, invented Jacob's staff and founded the scientific annual called *Ephemerides*. The improved astrolabe and Jacob's staff enabled men to calculate distances by ascertaining the height of the sun. Columbus, Vasco da Gama and Magellan could not have succeeded in their venture had it not been for the assistance afforded them by this astrolabe and Jacob's staff. When Columbus and Vespucci sailed for the shores of India, they brought with them the calculations which Regiomontanus had worked during the thirty-two years for his *Ephemerides*. By his employment of these calculations Columbus predicted an eclipse of the moon in the West Indies. Among the pupils of Regiomontanus were Martin Behaim and Bernard Walther, who proved a generous patron. Behaim of Nürnberg was a cosmographer and a navigator, who at sea verified information that had reached him. For example, he traced on his map the route to the East Indies, round the Cape of Good Hope, six years before its discovery by Vasco da Gama. Magellan was chivalrous enough to admit that he found the Straits, afterwards given his name, on a map of Behaim's, and it was this map which suggested the idea to him that it might be a route to the Molucca Islands.

In the geographical discoveries of the age Regiomontanus could claim that he and his pupils had a share. He could also justly claim that he was among the earliest to perform experiments, anticipating in this respect the spirit of Erasmus in another. Not content with his own work, he laboured to found a school or at least a system. He devised problems for his

students and offered prizes for their solution.¹ He lectured on his results to the citizens of Nürnberg, for he was anxious that all educated men should share his knowledge. Fortunately for him Bernard Walther was wealthy, and he enabled Regiomontanus to establish a printing-press with the object of producing learned mathematical and astronomical works;² he also published the first popular almanac. Walther built for him the first good observatory in Europe, equipping it with the best instruments of the day. Regiomontanus was the first astronomer, at least of the western world, to calculate the size, distance and orbits of the comets, thus enlarging the scientific horizon of men.

The scientific spirit of men like Cusanus, Peurbach and Regiomontanus took generations before they affected other thinkers, and generations more before they touched the middle classes. "The die is cast," wrote Kepler; "I have written my book. It will be read; whether in the present age or by posterity matters little. It can wait for its readers. Has not God waited six thousand years for one to contemplate His works?" Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* was published in 1776: Free Trade was not completely in force till after 1846. Edmund Burke dissected all the arguments in favour of the Penal Laws with incomparable force from 1760 to 1787: they were not abolished till 1829. A generation passed before the poetry of either Wordsworth or Browning was at all widely read. Even to-day it is a generation and a half before the thought of Cambridge or Oxford reaches the mind of the educated man: in the sixteenth century it was probably three or four generations. In one respect this century was fortunate. The geographical discoverers produced such far-reaching results that they compelled men to listen to the astronomer: the crust of prejudice in their brain, the cake of custom in their life, was so rudely broken that the shock obliged them to receive the new as well as the old. What Darwin accomplished in the nineteenth century by his *Origin of Species*, what Newton accomplished in the eighteenth by his *Principia*, Columbus and Copernicus accomplished in the sixteenth. On the natural man matters immediate, like the work of Vasco da Gama and his fellow-geographers, exercise more influence than matters remote, like that of Regiomontanus and his fellow-astronomers. In the geographical discoveries the citizen of the Holy Roman Empire attended more promptly to those affecting the East Indies

¹ J. Aschbach, *Gesch. der Wiener Universität*, I, p. 533.

² There is a list in A. Ziegler, *Regiomontanus*, pp. 25-37.

than to those affecting the West Indies. The day of the North Sea and the Atlantic was not as yet.

In Germany the centre of commercial gravity changed. The northern cities ultimately increased in prosperity while the southern decreased. Augsburg, Lübeck, Nürnberg, Ratisbon and Ulm were the chief cities trading between Germany and Venice. The connexion was so intimate that the merchants of Augsburg used to send their young business men to Venice because of its excellence as a school of commerce. Magellan's new sea route to the East Indies affected the current of commerce between Europe and Asia. For a time southern Germany was not appreciably altered. The merchants of Augsburg and Nürnberg enjoyed the advantages of their central position. They still sent their goods to Asia by the two old routes, that is, through Venice and Geneva and by the long sea route from Antwerp and round the western shores of Europe. There was the new way through Lisbon, and as an outcome of Magellan's work they almost at once employed it. North Germany prospered, and the Hansa entered upon a career of prosperity.

CHAPTER VII

THE FREE-WILL CONTROVERSY

THE saying that "Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched" is first alluded to by Erasmus himself in 1523, though the suspicion of the identity of their fundamental teaching had long been current.¹ The scholar informs a friend that the Franciscans say this of him. The truth, he adds, is that he had indeed laid a hen's egg, but Luther had hatched out quite a different nestling. One pamphleteer compares Erasmus to the miller who grinds the flour and Luther to the baker who bakes it into bread to feed the people. Bucer remarked: "In all things he (i.e. Luther) agrees with Erasmus: only what Erasmus merely suggests, he teaches plainly."² In 1534 Erasmus states that the German Franciscans repeat the saying, particularly the Cismontane commissioner of the Order, Nicholas Herborn. With the assistance of the friars he published a volume of sermons in Antwerp, in which appeared "the favourite assertion of the brethren" that "Erasmus is Luther's father." He laid the eggs and Luther hatched out the chicks. "Luther, Zwingli, Œcolampadius and Erasmus are the soldiers of Pilate who crucified Jesus."³ Similar utterances were widespread in orthodox circles.⁴ Killian Leib, the Prior of the monastery of Rebdorf, in describing in his *Annales* the year 1528, bewails the effect of the writings of the humanist on religious life of the time. "Wherever Erasmus had expressed a wish or even merely conveyed a hint, there Luther has broken in with all his might." Leib refers specially to the remarks contained in the *Annotations* on the New Testa-

¹ Erasmus's letter to the Lutheran John Cæsarius, Dec. 16, 1524, III, col. 840.

² Geresdiesius, *Monumenta*, I, p. 78.

³ To Senapius, July 31, 1534, in R. Stähelin, *Briefe aus der Reformationszeit*, p. 24.

⁴ Cf. Erasmus's letter to Wolsey, May 18, 1519, Allen, III, 587; his letter to Leo X, Sept. 13, 1520; Myconius's letter to Zwingli, June 10, 1520, Zwingli, *Op.*

ment, notably on Matthew xi, upon feasts and fasts, marriage laws and the practice of confession, on the heavy burden of prayers, the number of the Decretals, and the endless ceremonial rules.¹ Canisius records that he had frequently heard a saying which agrees with the words of Leib: "Ubi Erasmus innuit, illic Lutherus irruit." That is, where Erasmus merely indicated, Luther violently eradicated. "Erasmus is a more formidable enemy than Luther," Aleander reports, "he is the real father of the new heresy."² Melancthon wrote to Camerarius on July 26, 1529, that "the whole tragedy of the dispute on the Eucharist originated with him (i.e. Erasmus)."³ Eoban of Hesse compared Luther with Erasmus:

Ante quidem vidit mundoque ostendit Erasmus.
 Sæcula quo cernunt doctius ista nihil.
 Quam fecisse igitur velut est missus ostendisse,
 Lutherus meriti grandius instar habet.

There was one way to avoid such comparisons. Let Erasmus write against Luther. "So long as he refuses to write against Luther, we consider him a Lutheran," Erasmus tells his friend, Sir Thomas More.⁴ Henry VIII in 1521 and 1523 begged him to write,⁵ and Tunstall supported his plea.⁶ George of Saxony was as insistent in 1522 in his desire for Erasmus to write as Henry of England. The humanist doubted if he possessed the necessary knowledge: besides, he shared in part the ideas he was to refute. To this George answered that if Erasmus considered silence the best means of calming heresy he would cease to importune him. Nevertheless, he gave the author to understand that he had not changed his mind, and that he wished as ardently as ever to see him at last fight for the Catholic faith.⁷ Charles V was aware of the value of his services, and dreamt of giving him "command against the Lutheran faction,"⁸

¹ *Annales*, ed. Aretin, p. 1018.

² Report of Aleander in Friedrich, pp. 115-6; Balan, pp. 101-2; Brieger, pp. 52-4.

³ *Corp. Reform.*, I, p. 1083.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to More, 607 F, 1520.

⁵ Henry was greatly pleased with Erasmus's book. Vives told Erasmus that in November 1524 he had found Henry reading it. *Letters and Papers*, Nov. 13, 1524, No. 828; Vivis, *Opera*, VII, 180.

⁶ Tunstall's letter to Erasmus, July 7, 1523, 771 C. As Tunstall was tolerant it is worthy of note that in 1523 Catherine Zell, the Olympia Morata of Alsace, declared: "That governments should punish malefactors is right. But it does not belong to them to use violence in matters of faith; faith belongs to the domain of conscience and has nothing to do with the powers of this world."

⁷ Sept. 23, 1522.

⁸ Erasmus's letter to Gattinara, March 30, 1527.

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though doubtless the cares of empire, especially the Spanish anxieties, dispelled this dream. On August 8, 1522, Erasmus wrote to Mosellanus concerning the desire expressed by the Emperor, the King of England, and certain Roman cardinals. "All want me to attack Luther. I do not approve of Luther's cause, but have many reasons for preferring any other task to this."¹

Naturally the popes had tried to enlist the learning of the first man in Europe on behalf of the Church over which they presided. Leo X had asked him to intervene, but, in the face of the reluctance of Erasmus, he did not insist. His successor, Adrian VI, was more pressing. On December 1, 1522, he assured the scholar of his sympathy and stated that he refused to listen to the calumnies laid to his charge; and, in order to convince him of his sincerity, he enjoined Nicholas of Egmond to cease his attacks. Clement VII, like his predecessor, invited Erasmus to Rome, for where could he work better for the refutation of the Lutheran heresy than in the Vatican library?

After long delay Erasmus finally decided to comply with the urgent requests made to him, and to publish a book against the central point of Luther's creed, the determinism of the will.² The humanist insisted on the worth of man, the reformer on his worthlessness. The humanist emphasized the freedom of man, the reformer his serfdom. To Henry VIII Erasmus wrote, "The die is cast, my book on free will has appeared. In the actual state of things in Germany I expect to be stoned, and already some furious pieces of writing have been thrown at my head."³ The author, men said, maintained in true Erasmian fashion that he had only yielded against his will to strong persuasion, and that the work had been wrung from him; that, writing of free will, he had lost his own free will,⁴ and was therefore not to be taken seriously. This matter formed the foundation of Luther's theology, being no more than another aspect of the doctrine of justification by faith, the plea of the individualism of the Reformation.

From 1519 to April 1524, there had been no direct corre-

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 377, No. 6.

² Cf. *Luther's Briefe* (De Wette), 2, 49 f., 196, 200, 352 f., 411 f., 498 ff., 561 ff., 616, 626; Melancthon, *Corp. Reform.*, 1, 672, 674 f., 691, 734; *Epist. Hutten* (Böcking), 2, 409; Pirkheimer, *Opp.*, 278; *Anal. Luth.*, 8, 38; *Luther's Assertio omnium artic., Op. varii arg.*, V, 225 f., 239; VII, 113.

³ Sept. 6, 1524; cf. Erasmus's letter to Math. Ghiberti, Sept. 2, 152.

⁴ A. Freitag's Preface to *De Servo Arbitrio*, Weim. ed., 18, 577; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 656 ff.

spondence between the scholar and the prophet¹: they were never fated to meet face to face. The latter broke the silence by a letter complaining of the criticisms Erasmus had lately been directing against him, informing him that he has nothing to fear, "even though an Erasmus should fall on him tooth and nail." He eulogizes the abilities of Erasmus and implores him to leave his doctrines alone, and concern himself with his own humanist affairs. "I desire that the Lord may bestow upon you a spirit worthy of your name. If the Lord, however, still delay this gift, I would beg you meanwhile, if you can do nothing else, at least to remain a mere spectator of our tragedy. Do not write against me or increase the number and strength of my opponents; particularly do not attack me through the press, and I for my part shall also refrain from attacking you." If the scholar wrote against him he must expect the severest reprisals, for he was beginning to be tired of his clemency and of his mildness towards the sinners and the wicked.²

Blame of the *De Libero Arbitrio Diatribe*, 1524,³ came from his own camp.⁴ Men did not forget that the author of the new apologia had written the *Encomium Moriae*. It was at least possible he was an enemy in the disguise of a friend. "It would have been better for Christianity," wrote Hezius to Blossius, "if Erasmus had never touched theology or written anything on these matters. Many people think he would have done less evil in openly siding with Luther than by walking on two feet, and seeming to range himself now with one party, now with another. Divines hold that in time of schism those who wish at the same time to belong to two parties, and yet to be of neither the one nor the other, are more dangerous than those who join boldly one of them, be it even the worse."⁵

¹ Luther to Erasmus, about April 15, 1524, *Briefwechsel*, 4, p. 319; Kawerau, 15.

² Cf. Erasmus to Melanchthon, Sept. 6, 1524, *Corp. Reform.*, I, p. 672.

³ Cf. also Strauss, *Ulrich v. Hutten*, 448-84, 511-4; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, II, 32-55. On the worth of the *Diatribe* cf. A. Taube, *Luther's Lehre über die Freiheit . . . bis zum Jahre 1525* (Göttingen, 1901), 45-6; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, I, 691-4; Plitt, *Zeitschrift für luth. Theologie* (1866), 479 ff., 507 ff.; 9, col. 1215-48, Le Clerc. In German in Walch's edition of Luther's works, 18, p. 1962 *et seq.* New critical ed. with introduction by Joh. von Walter in the *Quellen und Schriften zur Gesch. des Protestantismus*, No. 8, Leipzig, 1910. It was translated into German in 1525.

⁴ On Erasmus's feelings regarding these attacks cf. his correspondence with Melanchthon, Sept. 6, 1524, Dec. 10, 1524, Le Clerc; his letter to Spalatin, Sept. 6, 1524 (in *Vita Spalatin*); cf. also L. K. Enthoven, *Briefe an Erasmus*, 8; Zickendraht, *Der Streit zwischen Erasmus u. Luther über die Willensfreiheit*, 10, 16, 49, 183.

⁵ Oct. 26 1523, Balan.

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The Prince of Carpi suspected all theology coming from the author of the *Praise of Folly*, "that infected soil whence sprang spontaneously such great trees bearing poisoned fruit."¹ Erasmus does not criticize some Lutheran dogmas. Does he not therefore tacitly imply approval of those he refuses to condemn? Bullinger regarded the book as blasphemous.² To Capito it was a "carnal book,"³ and, in a letter he wrote on his own behalf and that of his friends, Hedio, Bucer, and others, he was not slow to express his contempt for this "slave of glory," who preferred "peace under Antichrist to war under Christ."⁴ On the other hand Clement VII warmly approved of it.⁵

The quarrel between Erasmus and Luther is in reality another phase of the controversy that once ranged round the problem of Free Will and Grace. It is as ancient as the contest between St. Paul and the Stoics, as modern as the question of the miraculous, for if a man believes in the freedom of the will he can also believe in miracle. When Christianity was fighting against Manichæan dualism it maintained human liberty as resolutely as St. Austin.⁶ There was a reaction when Pelagius, influenced by classical writers, notably Seneca, insisted that liberty is the honour, the dignity, of man. This liberty includes the power of choice between good and evil: it is as freely exercised after sin as before it. In the sixteenth century the humanists for the most part lean to the doctrine of the freedom of the will⁷: the Lutherans stoutly opposed it. The Pelagians hold that man alone acts. The Lutherans hold that God alone acts on man: they do not hold that God and man act together. John Locke and Deists like Tindall lean to the Pelagian view. Rousseau implicitly held it when he said, "L'homme naît bon," and Ritschl holds it.

In order to justify the ways of God to man, Erasmus applies himself to the examination of the relevant parts of the Bible. His exegesis is subject to the judgment of the Church, and he offers to withdraw with a good grace any part of it, if required.

¹ Alberto Pio, Prince of Carpi, to Erasmus, May 1, 1526, Von der Hardt, *Historia literaria Reformationis*.

² Bullinger's letter to Stilz, Jan. 1526, Hess.

³ Capito's letter to Bruckner, Oct. 14, 1524, Bruckner.

⁴ Capito, Hedio, Bucer, etc., to Luther, Nov. 23, 1524, Enders.

⁵ Balan, *Mon. ref.*, 380; Baumgarten, *Karl V.*, II, 631; Villa, 253; Maurenbrecher, *Kathol. Ref.*, 270, 406.

⁶ *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, 15; *De Correptione et Gratia*, 11.

⁷ In his dialogue, *De Libertate Arbitrii*, Lorenzo Valla sets forth the agreement of human liberty with Divine Providence.

That is, the scholar whose life had been spent in developing the free interpretation of the sources of Christianity, by the light of reason and knowledge, now rests his plea on authority and offers to submit the results of his method to the bar of authority. The method adopted has passed away and with its disappearance much of the interest of the booklet, though the agreeable Latin in which it is written makes it a pleasure to read. The doctrine professed by Luther¹ has affinities with the Manichæans and Wyclif, yet Erasmus never accuses his opponent of heresy. He had strong grounds for thinking, so he informed Archbishop Warham, that his answer "would shut the mouths of those who endeavoured to persuade the princes of his complete agreement with Luther."² The method of the modern determinist was not open to him. Pure speculation and psychological observation were not for him. His linguistical knowledge of the Bible and his skill in the interpretation thereof were the sole weapons employed. From it he deduced that God is master and man was a slave, though a slave with a share of freedom and responsibility. It was an old position with him, for in his *Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans* in 1517 he had defended the liberty of man.³ Before Pascal he believes that mankind is *ni ange, ni bête*. Man is a pilot who thanks God for having saved him from a tempest. Nevertheless, his own talent is essential for the navigation of the ship. As Fénelon put it: man acts, God leads him. The Erasmian attitude to wrong was as clear as in his letter to

¹ For an examination of this doctrine cf. Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 195-9, 367-9; Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3⁴, 841, 860; Denifle-Weiss, 1², 472, 486 ff., 508, 511-3; Drew's *Pirkheimer's Stellung zur Reformation*, 119; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 1, 695-702; Kattenbusch, *Luther's Lehre vom unfreien Willen* (Göttingen, 1905), 7-12, 15 ff., 22, 28, 32-6, 41 ff., 48-51, 94 ff., 264; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, 1², 144, 218, 355, 359, 365-6, 369-70; 2², 70, 80-2, 316; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 358 ff., 657, 663 ff.; 2², 82, 124; Kawerau in W. Möller, *Lehrbuch der Kirchengesch.*, 3³ (1907), pp. 41, 43, 63; Loof's *Dogmengesch.*, 757-8, 763, 766 ff.; M. Scheibe, *Calvin's Prädestinationslehre, ein Beitrag zur Würdigung der Eigenart seiner Theologie u. Religiosität* (Halle, 1897), 12; Schmidt, *Melanchthon*, 74, 308-11; M. Staube, *Das Verhältniss der menschlichen Willensfreiheit zur Gotteslehre bei Luther u. Zwingli* (Zürich, 1894), 2 ff., 36-40; J. Mausbach, *Die kathol. Moral u. ihre Gegner* (1911), 137 ff.; A. Taube, *Luther's Lehre über die Freiheit u. Ausrüstung des natürlichen Menschen bis 1525* (Göttingen, 1901), 10 ff., 19-22, 33, 35 ff., 48-9, 228; K. Zickendraht, *Der Streit zwischen Erasmus u. Luther über die Willensfreiheit* (1909), 79, 81, 130, 134, 141, 168, 180 ff., 197. A. Ritschl records his unfavourable judgment in his *Die christl. Lehre von der Rechtfertigung u. Versöhnung*, 1², 221; 3⁴, 280, 296 ff.

² Sept. 4, 1524: "Certe sic obturavero os istis, qui principibus omnibus hoc persuadere conantur."

³ Cf. *Paraph.*, Rom. ix. 14-5; Erasmus's letter to Mark Laurin, Feb. 1, 1523, p. 764.

Marlian when he inquired, "Where have I said that the least of our acts was a sin?"¹

As in the *Enchiridion* and the important *Paraphrases*, Erasmus believes that, in spite of the fall of Adam, man is capable of having faith in God. "They singularly exaggerate original sin who maintain that the best powers of human nature are so corrupt that it can accomplish nothing of itself except to hate God and to be ignorant of him."² In the *Paraphrases* he had raised a notable point. If nature is capable of finding truth, what is the necessity for Christ? He had no solution in 1518 and 1519. Luther then had his solution, which largely consisted in denying that there was such a problem as that raised by Erasmus. In other words, he shut his eyes to the world of experience, thereby omitting present knowledge and making a break with past knowledge. Erasmus saw the continuity of the divine process. There had been a law of nature: that was in the time of the classical world. There had been a law of works: that was under the law of Moses. There was now the law of grace: that was under Christ. Stage by stage Providence has guided the human race to perfection.³ There is not, as in Luther, opposition between the stages. Antiquity prepares the way for Judaism, and Judaism in turn prepares the way for Christ.

To Erasmus the Bible assumes the freedom of the will throughout. The Old Testament in particular speaks of rewards and punishments, showing us God angry with our faults and pleased with our repentance. Why should He curse men if they sin of necessity? What is the use of commands if they cannot be observed?⁴ The Gospel invites us to strive and to watch, pointing out that we shall be judged by our strivings and our watchings. Now how shall we be judged if our acts are inevitable? Who dare speak of strivings if there is no liberty? As Erasmus dryly remarks, "Neque natura, neque necessitas habet meritum."⁵ The views of the wise, the traditions of the doctors, the beliefs of humanity, the testimony of our own conscience—all tell us that in this matter the Bible is plainly right. Erasmus makes little attempt to solve the nature of human will, whether it is, as with Occam, the sove-

¹ March 25, 1520, p. 544.

² *Diatriba*, IX, 1246; *Hyperaspistes*, 1260. Cf. the latter, p. 1454: "Lutherus . . . ex homine faciet Satanam"; cf. also Delaruelle, *G. Budé*, 55; Zickendraht, 165.

³ *Diatriba*, 1222.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 1226-7, 1238.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1227-8.

reign power of choice or, as with Aquinas, the habit of good, though he leans to this standpoint. Be this as it may, he agrees with Lorenzo Valla that we cannot deny the freedom of the will, though we remain ignorant of its nature. Without it, however, and without the motive of merit it assumes, there is meaning neither in life nor in religion.¹

The author offers a vigorous defence of authority. Men claim individual inspiration, inner illumination, when they oppose the Church. The light they received, however, could not be clear, for it led them in diverse directions. In a penetrating analysis Erasmus examines the current view. Men say the mere number adds nothing to the value of the judgments on the meaning of the Spirit. True, but does the individual add much? They ask, What is the value of the mitre of the bishop in understanding the Scriptures? What is the worth of the cowl of the monk? Is not the Spirit alone the judge? True, but who will certify the possession of the Spirit? Are men themselves to certify it? They barely believe the Apostles who confirmed their doctrine by miracles. Let one of these new apostles show me one of their number who has been able to heal a lame horse. And if against them, very much against them, others speak in the name of the Spirit, who will decide? Here is their crux.²

In the interpretation of the Bible Erasmus lays stress on the agreement of the Fathers, regarding this as peculiarly valuable.³ "What has been transmitted by the general assent of the orthodox doctors and what has been clearly defined by the Church must no longer be discussed, but believed."⁴ The Church is greater than its fathers and doctors, its schools and systems, taking from them all that assists its divine mission: if it is without mental haste, it is without mental rest. "Time," thinks Erasmus, "bears many matters with it: it changes many others. In apostolic times the tiny Christian community met in upper rooms: now the crowd of the faithful assemble in a public temple. . . . In apostolic times, in the assembly of the brethren, one sang a hymn, another a psalm, one spoke in divers tongues, another prophesied. Now some have a fixed office arranged beforehand. . . . In olden days the bishops were elected by the votes of the people. Abuses led us to confide this function to the hands of selected men. For centuries

¹ *Diatrise*, pp. 1217-8; cf. *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1382.

² *Ibid.*, p. 1219 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1219.

⁴ Cf. *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1259: "Oportet enim . . . esse disputandi finem;" cf. *ibid.*, p. 1297.

it seemed abominable to Christians to see in their temples statues or images. . . . Now the use of such symbols has grown to such a degree that their number is not only excessive, but it is sometimes inconvenient. . . . Had Paul lived in our time, would he have reproved these customs ? ” The change of ceremony testifies to the change in dogma, to its gradual enrichment of all that truth yields to the Church.

Praise of the *Diatribæ* came from the enemy's camp. Melanchthon had the magnanimity to confess that “ your moderation pleases us, though you have thrown on passages some grains of black salt. But Luther is so angry as to be able to get nothing out of it. Besides, he promises to show himself in his reply as moderate as you are. . . . I know his grateful feelings for you : it makes me hope he will answer you without delay. . . . Luther salutes you with respect.”

This letter of Melanchthon's ¹ is all the more creditable to him, for he had defended the slavery of the human will against the theologians of Paris. Cardinal Jacopo Sadoletto,² Juan Luis Vives³ in the name of the King of England, Paul Volz⁴ and the astute Chancellor Gattinara⁵ expressed their lively gratitude. Martin Lipsius agreed with this praise. Ulrich Zasius, the Freiburg-im-Breisgau lawyer, who had hitherto been wavering, wrote enthusiastically of the work to Boniface Amerbach.⁶ Ferdinand, the brother of the Emperor, expressed his satisfaction with the book. The sincere Duke George wrote his warmest thanks to the author : “ Continue the contest you have begun ; the Pope, the Emperor, all the great men of the Church are on your side. The spouse of Christ, our holy Mother Church, will smile on you : under her eyes, encouraged by her applause,

¹ Melanchthon's letter to Erasmus, Sept. 30, 1524, *Corp. reform.*, I, p. 675. Cf. his letter to Spalatin, Sept., 1524 (*Mel. Op.*) ; his letter to Œcolampadius, 1524 (*Epistolæ quæ in corpore reformatorum desiderantur*, ed. Bindseil) ; Botzheim's letter to Erasmus, Nov. 16, 1524, Enthoven ; Hummelberg's letter to Rhenanus, April 6, 1526, Beat., Rhen. *Briefw.* ; Erasmus's letter to Melanchthon, Dec. 10, 1524. In 1559 Melanchthon wrote: “ Both during Luther's lifetime and also later I fought against the Stoical and Manichæan delusion which led Luther and others to write, that all good works whether good or evil, in all men whether good or bad, take place of necessity. Now it is obvious that this doctrine is contrary to God's Word, subversive of all discipline and a blasphemy against God ” (Melanchthon's letter to the Elector of Saxony, *Corp. Reform.*, 9, p. 766). “ By divine command,” holds Melanchthon, “ the public authorities must take action against idolaters and forbid blasphemy, as, for example, when a man teaches that good or evil takes place of necessity and under compulsion ” (*Corp. Reform.*, 24, p. 375).

² Nov. 6, 1524, 824 E.

³ Nov. 13, 1524, Brewer.

⁴ Dec. 11, 1524, Förstemann and Günther.

⁵ Oct. 28, 1525, Helfferich.

⁶ *Epist.*, ed. Riegger, Ep. 45.

you will shiver lances, and on your white hair you will receive the crown of Christ.”¹ Deliberately orthodox as he was, the Duke eagerly desired a disciplinary, not a doctrinal, reformation.

Much against his will, Luther admitted the kindness with which Erasmus assaulted the most vital point of his teaching, as he justly termed it. The question dealt with, he said, certainly constituted the central point of the quarrel: it is absolutely essential that we should know what and how much we are capable of in our relations to God, otherwise we remain ignorant of God’s work, nay, of God Himself, and are unable to honour, to thank, or to serve Him.² The author, unlike his previous opponents, “had seized upon the real question at issue, the *summa causæ*.” He had not scolded him on the papacy, indulgences, and similar subjects, but had hit upon the cardinal point, and held the knife at his throat. God had not, however, yet bestowed on Erasmus the grace which would have fitted him to deal with the controversy. The influence of Occam and Biel was still weighty with Luther, for they aid him in his grasp of the absolute will of God. It is significant that Ritschl refound in the *De Servo Arbitrio* the absolute will of God.

Like the Montanists, Luther referred everything to God. Both Montanus and the reformer were able to speak “in the spirit by ecstatic vision.” Did not the Paraclete utter through the lips of Montanus, “Behold a man is as a lyre, and I hover round as the plectrum: the man sleeps and I watch; behold it is the Lord who transports the hearts of men, and gives them (new ?) hearts !” They are as passive as clay in the hands of the potter. Erasmus cites in his *Diatribæ* a long list of the names of free-will advocates; they include Origen, Basil Chrysostom, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius and Ambrose. In his reply Luther cites two, and they are Wyclif and Valla. Erasmus emphasized the point that, according to Luther, not only every good but also every evil comes from God. Was this in agreement with the nature of God? Was it not excluded by His holiness? According to Luther, God inflicted eternal damnation on sinners who, as they were not free agents, could not be held accountable for their sins. Who can resolve to love with all

¹ Duke George’s letter to Erasmus, Sept. 21, 1524; Nov. 29, 1524; Feb. 13, 1525. Cf. Döllinger, *Die Reformation*, I, p. 7; Horawitz, *Erasmiana*, *Wiener Sitzungsber.*, bd. 90 (1878), 397 ff.

² In the introduction to the work *De Servo Arbitrio*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 614; Erl. ed., 7, p. 131. Calvin was in agreement with Luther on the question of free will. Cf. Calvin’s *Opera*, VI, pp. 248–9, 251; *Opusculæ*, pp. 276, 279, 288. “The doctrine of Luther’s is also ours,” *Opera*, VI, p. 260.

his heart a Deity who has created the torments of hell in order to punish some unhappy people for His own crimes, as if He loved to see them suffer? What sinner will henceforth try to amend his life? The Scripture passages bearing on the question, especially those used by Luther in his *Assertio*, are subjected to a careful analysis. The orthodox Church was clever enough to employ such humanistic doctrine, with the result that the successors of Erasmus and Reuchlin during the next two centuries are to be found in the schools of the Jesuits.

The work reached Wittenberg in September 1524. At first Luther treated it with contempt. He told Spalatin on November 1 that he had been able to read only eight pages of it, and that it disgusted him beyond measure.¹ The delay in the reply was due in part to the Peasants' War and in part to his marriage with Catherine Bora.² The effect of the *Diatribes* made it too serious to be neglected.

The humanists, naturally following Erasmus, were impressed by his book. Conrad Mutianus, now an old man, welcomed the defence of free will.³ He was a singularly interesting type. He was educated at the school of Hegius at Deventer, Erasmus's old school. The fundamental maxim of Hegius was that learning gained at the expense of religion was lost. Mutianus studied at Erfurt, proceeded to Italy, where he became strongly attached to Neo-Platonism, and to its advocates, Angelo Poliziano and Marsilio Ficino. On his return to Germany he was given a poor prebend at Gotha, where he lived a scholar's life, inscribing over his door the motto *Beata tranquillitas*. He wrote no book, compared himself in this respect to Socrates and Christ, who also bequeathed no writing to mankind. His delightful confidential letters to his friend reveal his views. Natural religion was congenial to his nature. As Christ was the Word of God before His incarnation, He was therefore a light to the Greeks and Romans. So far did he carry this view that he once taught, "There is only one God and one Goddess, though there are as many names as deities—for example, Jupiter, Sol, Apollo, Moses, Christ, Luna, Ceres, Proserpina, Tellus, and Mary. But beware of repeating this. These matters must be wrapped in silence. In matters of

¹ Luther's letter to Spalatin, Nov. 1, 1524, *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 46.

² Mathesius, *Tischreden*, p. 146. Catherine made him reply. E. Kroker, *Katherine Bora* (Leipzig, 1906), 280 ff. Cf. N. Paulus, *Luther u. die Gewissensfreiheit*, 52 ff.; W. Köhler, *Katholizismus u. Reformation*, 54-8.

³ Mutianus's letter to Erasmus, Feb. 1524. *Briefw. des Mutianus Rufus*. Cf. K. Gillert, *Briefwechsel des Konrad Mutianus* (Halle, 1890), 300.

religion we must make use of the mask of fables and enigmas.”¹ In historical Christianity he was not interested: in spiritual Christianity he was intensely interested. As a cautious believer in toleration he befriended Reuchlin: for he at once saw that in this case his principle was at stake. Among the members of the club which he formed at Gotha, for discussion of the new books from Italy, were Georg Spalatin, and Heinrich Fastnacht, who called himself “Urbanus.” He impregnated such men as Eoban of Hesse, Ulrich von Hutten, and Johann Jäger, who called himself first “Venator” and then “Crotus Rubianus,” with his love of inquiry.²

Conrad Mutianus was not the only man to be influenced by the *De Libero Arbitrio*. Hunus Crotus, Wilibald Pirckheimer, and Ulrich Zasius returned to the attitude of suspicion of the new faith. Budé, Vives, and Sir Thomas More remain firm in their adhesion. The author informed Cardinal Sadoletto that as a result of his book, scholars, deceived by Lutheran dogma, were everywhere altering their opinions.³ On the other hand, the scholars of Erfurt were not to be separated from Luther; neither were Justus Jonas, Adam Kraft, Johann Lang, Euricius Cordus, John Draconites, Joachim Camerarius, Menius and Eoban of Hesse, who, however, wavered long. The movement which made Luther possible made Erasmus impossible. The conservative reformer is never popular. Erasmus no more secured favour than Wolsey. In his departure from the traditional faith Luther possessed much sympathy from men of learning. The reign of individuality ushered in by the Renaissance stood for the tendency to emphasize the natural ability and independence of man. Pico della Mirandola wrote an illuminating book *On the Dignity of Man*. With an utter disregard for scholasticism, Michelet makes the discovery of humanity the essential characteristic of the Renaissance.⁴ Erasmus had too thoroughly absorbed the spirit of ancient rationalism and classic moralism to admit even for a moment that his will was a mere plaything in the hands of God. Luther looked outward in this respect, Erasmus looked inward. Truth is not outside us but within us, part of the living reality of our

¹ Krause, *Der Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*, p. 28; cf. Strauss, II, p. 47.

² On Mutianus and these men cf. Kampschulte, *Die Universität Erfurt in ihrem Verhältniss zu dem Humanismus und der Reformation*, I, p. 74 ff. On Crotus Rubianus cf. *ibid.*, II, pp. 44-5.

³ Erasmus's letter to Sadoletto, Feb. 23, 1525: “Ego simili comitate non paucos revocavi a factione damnata et jam passim redduntur litteræ quibus declarant se persuasos libello *De Libero Arbitrio* ab hoc Lutheri dogmati descivisse.”

⁴ *Renaissance*, p. ii.

being. Were the great men who had laid down their lives in the noblest causes, Socrates, Decius, the martyrs of early Christianity, simply instruments of Divine Omnipotence? ¹ Had they no merit of their own? Did they only serve to show forth to men the power of God? Such fatalism was absolutely unacceptable to scholars to whom the personality of the individual was an end and not merely a means. To Luther the renunciation of all self-confidence is a fundamental of Christian experience. To Erasmus the ability of man to realize the mind of God to the fullest extent of his powers—and the scholar amply recognizes the constant need of Divine grace—is just as fundamental. The alienation of the humanist was a tragedy.²

The personal element in the alienation entered. Erasmus was the leader of a great body of scholars. Luther was the leader of a growing band of reformers. There was a whole heaven between them. Erasmus was no believer in the new doctrines advanced and he was no approver of the new methods employed.³ Was it a proof of cowardice that he was not willing to die for a faith he did not share? Was it inconsistent to cease to have relations with a party to which at heart he never belonged? Was it so very unintelligible that he who had so long been leader should refuse to be led? Reuchlin had refused to follow Luther. Erasmus could not become a follower of Luther, and Luther would tolerate none but followers. Erasmus had prepared the way for the new Messiah, only to find that there was no longer a place for John the Baptist. In fact, Luther had come to the stage when the paths decisively diverged, the one heading to evolution and the other to revolution. The choice lay between reform and revolution, and Luther chose revolution. Humanism in his eyes blocked the road to spiritual freedom. The cause of Erasmus was suffering desertion from its ranks, a plain proof that God was not with him. There are evil spirits, as German legend tells us, which it is easier to raise than to lay, and the spirit of revolt is of them. Erasmus had raised the tempest but could not

¹ Cf. Ficker's edition of Luther's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, II, p. 1: "The wisest, the justest of antiquity were unable to become just." Cf. Luther's letter to Spalatin, Enders, I, No. 25.

² Cf. Stromer's letter to Pirkheimer, Oct. 12, 1525, Heumann, *Documenta litteraria*: "Male me habuit quod Erasmus noster scripsit de libero arbitrio, pejus me habet quod Lutherus jam respondet; timeo futuram magnam tragœdiam."

³ Cf. his letter to G. de Brie, Aug. 25, 1525, p. 883: "Lutherus dum omnia conatur novare, subvertit omnia, et pro sinistre tentata libertate duplicavit nobis servitutem."

control it. Luther was to control as well as to continue to raise the tempest.

The Reformation and the Renaissance had been related as the smaller movement to the larger. Erasmus had created the conditions which rendered the Lutheran revolt possible. The liberals of the day, the humanists, were as stoutly opposed as Luther to the reign of scholastic authority and of scholasticism. It proved impossible on this point to reconcile Protestant humanism and Protestant Lutheranism. The day for argument was going, if not gone, for Erasmus was beginning to insist that there are evils which can only be healed by fire and sword.¹ So thought the head of the writer, but his heart shrank from it. Tragedy, according to Hegel, is not the conflict between right and wrong, but the conflict between right and right. That tragedy was now to be witnessed. In 1525 the Council of Bâle consulted Erasmus on the policy to be pursued towards the reforming party. In reply he declared himself friendly to innovators not shaking public order, and advised the magistrates not to burn the writings of Bugenhagen or Æcolampadius.

On paper the scholar had won a great triumph by his *De Libero Arbitrio*, but the reality was far different. For more than a generation he had received the plaudits of men. He had been abused, but that had been by monks who had reasons of their own—reasons he could afford to despise. Now he had not allayed the suspicions of the orthodox, and was an object of deep distrust to the followers of Luther. His was the destiny of Montaigne, who remarked, “Je fus pelaudé à toutes mains ; au Ghibelain j’étais Guelfe, au Guelfe Ghibelain.”² Some princes and not a few learned men had gone over to the other side, and his defence of free will ultimately involved him in controversies with many German and Swiss reformers. Above all, he saw the failure of his life-work. His victories in the past had been Cadmean. The plan of peaceful reform, the success of his method by the employment of the mind of man, was doomed to come to naught—in his day at least. His courage had once been buoyant, his hopes had once been high. He had walked on the heights when the sun of success—the success of his ideal—was shining. Now he could not avoid despondency as he thought about the

¹ Erasmus's letter to Melanchthon, Dec. 10, 1524: “Fortasse nostri mores meruerunt tam inclementem medicum qui sectionibus et usturis curaret morbum.” Melanchthon alluded to these words in his funeral sermon on Luther.

² *Essais*, I, iii, ch. 12.

unknown future. He felt weary of the struggle and was tempted to think that he had failed. Years of strenuous service to the cause of toleration lay behind him, and what was the outcome of it all? The high spirits, the resilient spring of youth, were gone. Was the reward of old age, the realization of his dearest hopes, not to be his? For his own dignity, for his own comfort he was concerned. It is bare justice to him to say that he was infinitely more concerned for the cause of truth. Reuchlin could say, "I reverence St. Jerome as an angel, I respect De Lyra as a master, but I adore truth as a God." That reverence for the Fathers, that respect for the classical writers, that love of truth was the possession of Erasmus. The gifts of the man of thought had been abundantly bestowed upon him, those of the man of action had been denied him. The fervour of faith he lacked, the composure of culture he possessed. Had he coveted wealth or worldly distinction, he could easily have secured either or both. He had preferred the path of knowledge, and that path was one day to lead to the goal of toleration. He realized too keenly how thin is the layer between the fabric of society and the volcanic heat and destroying flame of anarchy. Like Burke, he trembled at the sight and he shrank back at the dire prospect.

Once Erasmus had satirized others: now his own turn had come. A shower of abusive pamphlets fell all around him. The "pseudo-Lutherans" threatened in his eyes to overthrow everything and to place Europe in a state of Scythic barbarism.¹ Where in 1525 was there the brilliant literary promise of the years from 1515 to 1520? Not a few of the humanists had adhered to the Lutheran cause, and death had thinned their ranks. Longueil, Linacre, Baptista, Deloynes and Martin van Dorp—all had gone.² The Peasants' War had ruined the University of Erfurt. Joachim Camerarius, the friend of Melanchthon, Niger, Euricius Cordus, the Latin poet, and Mycellius, the glories of German humanism, were seeking place and profit. Eoban of Hesse, the poet, was shorter of money than ever. When had letters reached such a low level? As often happens in revolutions, one great interest was thrust aside by another. Men realized that there was more in life than the classics, and, realizing it, forsook them. The elevation of the mind was important, but was not that of the soul more so? The altar of knowledge was deserted for the altar of faith. The Great High Priest of culture ministered as of old,

¹ Erasmus's letter to Eoban, Sept. 6, 1524 (Horowitz).

² Erasmus's letter to Germ. Brixius, Aug. 25, 1525, 883 F.

but the worshippers were no longer there. Growing old, lonely, he saw the clouds of darkness gathering round him: he saw not the light that was already breaking through them. He had taken his candle, and in its clear but contracted light he had striven through the intellectual darkness past every obstacle, stopping his ears against the fears of his body and against the voices of his friends. There had been conflicts without, but was there not to be peace within? The gloom was encircling him, but was it to be complete? Was he in his lifelong quest to be in the end utterly alone with the Alone?

About the time of the free-will controversy, Luther in the *Table-talk* delivered his soul on the character and ability of his enemy. There he grudgingly admits that Erasmus has rendered the gospel exceedingly great services, though he cares more for the glitter of a worldly mind than for holy truth.¹ Had St. John spoken like Demosthenes, Erasmus would have esteemed him more highly.² He believes in Democritus, in Epicurus, and, above all, in his dear Lucian, and Lucian is even less obnoxious than he.³ For him the word of Christ has no more weight than Solon's.⁴ Belief in the immortality of the soul is a mere fable.⁵ God the Father and God the Son seem to him absurd, and even more absurd are the people who believe in them seriously.⁶ If it were possible to analyse his heart, one would see there grinning figures laughing at the sacraments and at the Trinity.⁷ They say that he is a Lutheran, a suspicion that does too much honour to Luther and from this honour

¹ Luther's *Tischreden* (Schmidt): "Erasmus hatte dem Handel des Evangelii wohl können dienen und nütze sein . . . hats aber nicht gethan . . . 'Arius sucht nicht Gottes Ehre.'"

² *Ibid.*: "Ich glaube, dass sich Erasmus sehr ärgere an solcher Einfältigkeit S. Johannis, und denkt, er redte nicht wie Homerus, Cicero, Demosthenes, Virgilius, noch auch wie wir auch nach der Vernunft."

³ *Ibid.*: "Seine wörter fechten mich nichts an: sie sind wohl gut und geschmückt, aber es ist eitel demokritisch und epikurisch Ding . . . Lucianum lobe ich doch, der gehet frei heraus und verspottet Alles öffentlich: Erasmus aber verfälscht Alles, was Gottes ist, unterm Schein der Gottseligkeit."

⁴ *Ibid.*: "Er macht schier kein Unterschied . . . zwischen Christo und Solon, dem heidnischen weisen Gesetzgeber."

⁵ *Ibid.*: "Erasmus ist so gewiss, dass kein Gott ist, kein zukünftig Leben, so gewiss ich bin, dass ich Gott lobe, sehe."

⁶ Cordatus, *Tagebuch*: "Diesem Erasmo ist Pater et Filius ein lächerlich ding."

⁷ Loesche, *Analecta Luth. et Melanchth.*: "Wen ich volt Erasmi hertz aufschneiden, so wolt ich eytel lachente meuler finden, de sacrament et de trinitate: es ist eittel gelechter mit ihm." Cf. Schlaginhaufen, *Aufzeichnungen*, 29, 96 ff.; Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 311.

he is anxious to be freed.¹ Is he a Catholic? Scarcely. He is a Papist, the sworn enemy of all religious men.² He pretends to comment on the sacred texts and amuses himself with destroying the belief of his readers.³ He is the most dangerous enemy Christianity has encountered for the last six centuries, the personal enemy of God, who will avenge Himself on him.⁴ Unfortunately, it is no easy matter to refute Erasmus. As Hutten remarks, this impious man is a veritable Proteus.⁵ He is, in a word, "the king of amphibology."⁶ He excels in finding the most subversive ideas in an ambiguous form.⁷ Twisting like an eel, he leaps from one affirmation to another exactly opposite.⁸ He takes trouble not to utter a plain yes or no.⁹ Never betraying his true sentiments, he never gives a firm opening to his adversaries, Catholic or Lutheran, and he is as dangerous to the one as to the other.¹⁰

Simultaneously with the publication of the *De Servo Arbitrio*¹¹ Luther wrote to Erasmus a letter—now lost—demanding his gratitude for the skill with which, on account of their friendship, he had avoided making several retorts.¹² Disguising the feelings manifested in the *Table-talk*, he swore that he entertained the

¹ Luther's *Tischreden*: "Ich will ihn ein Mal von dem Argwilm erledigen bei den Papisten, dass er nicht lutherisch ist, sondern ein papistischer Klotz."

² Loesche, *Analecta Luth. et Melanchth.*: "Erasmus fuit fere Italicus, Epicurus." *Tischreden* (Schmidt): "Er ist ein Verwüster der Religion . . . verwirft die ganze Religion."

³ Luther's *Tischreden*: "Erasmus hat lose, faule Präfatione und Vorrede gemacht." Cf. Cordatus, *Tagebuch*.

⁴ Luther's *Tischreden*: "Erasmus ist . . . ein sonderlicher Feind und Widersacher Christi. . . . Das lasse ich nach mir im Testament, und dazu nehme ich Euch zu Zeugen, dass ich Erasmus für den höchsten Feind Christi halte, als keiner in tausent Jahren nicht gewesen ist."

⁵ Hutten, *Expostulatio cum Erasmo* (Hutt., *Op.*, Böcking): "Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo." Cf. *De Servo Arbitrio*: "Nisi quis Protei capiendi peritus fuerit." Cf. Hess, II, 453; Durand de Laur, II, 546, 561.

⁶ Luther's *Tischreden* (Schmidt): "Erasmus ist rex amphiboliarum."

⁷ *Ibid.*: "Alle seine Schriften kann man ziehen und deuten, wie und wohin man will, darumb kann er weder von uns noch von den Papisten ergriffen werden."

⁸ *Ibid.*: "Also pflegt sich der Ael zu schlingen, winden und beisen."

⁹ Luther's *Tischreden* (in Mathes. Sammlung): "Doctor dixit, Fridericum electorem aliquando convenisse Erasmus Coloniae et ornasse eum munere mit einem Damaschgat, sed postea dixisse ad Spalatinum: Qualis ille vir est? Weiss man doch nicht wie man mit ihm dran ist. Georgius princeps dixit: Das in die Sucht erotoss . . . Weiss man doch nicht, worauf er beharrt. Ich lob noch die von Wittenberg, die sagen doch ja und nein."

¹⁰ Luther's *Tischreden* (Schmidt): "Wiewohl diese Schlange schlupferig ist, dass man sie nicht wohl ergreifen noch fassen kann."

¹¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, pp. 600-787; Erl. ed., 7, pp. 113-368. There is a new German translation by O. Scheel in Luther's *Werke*, ed. Buchwald, etc., supp. vol. II, Berlin, 1905, p. 203 ff.

¹² Erasmus's letter to Wolsey, April 25, 1526, 929 f.

kindest feelings to Erasmus. (In his penetrating and remarkably frank work Luther practically abolished the freedom of the will, even in the performance of works not connected with salvation. He makes the casual remark that man is free in inferior matters. Like Trithemius, an encyclopædia of learning, he does not believe that man is under subjection to the stars. The question he has in his mind is, Does man possess free will in respect of God? ¹ And to this question he returns an unhesitating negative. To the writer the all-powerful Divine control was utterly inconsistent with the freedom of the human will. The awakening of religious feeling exalted the power of God and annulled that of man; for religion was realized to be the complete dependence in which man feels himself in all his relations with God. Man was the slave of God, but he was free from the yoke of the Church. God's omnipotence excludes all choice on man's part. God's omniscience is the fundamental fact. From all eternity He sees all events, even the most trifling: hence they must happen. If there is Providence, there is no free will; and if there is free will, there is no Providence. This the Bible proves. It is noteworthy that in the *De Libero Arbitrio* Erasmus appeals to authority, and it is no less noteworthy that he also appeals to reason, to the liberty of the individual to search and see in the Scriptures whether these things were so. Luther had often employed the Austinian distinction between the "inner" and the "outer" Word of God. Therein he was influenced by the mystical conception of the separation between the Scriptures and the Word of God.² In practice, however, the distinction disappeared, for to him the inner was bound up with the outer. The secret and the manifest will of God were not similarly reconciled. Luther argues: "All that He has made, He moves, impels, and urges forward with the force of His omnipotence, which none can escape or alter; all must yield compliance and obedience according to the nature of the power conferred on them by God."³

Long before Calvin⁴ and the Jansenists, he exposed the powerlessness of reason. Occam and Biel had exposed it before him, and their influence is marked in Luther's thought. His antithesis of faith and reason, the absolute sovereignty of

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 781; Erl. ed., 7, p. 359. Cf. Bullinger's letter to Stilz, Jan. 1526, Hess.

² Schenkel, *Das Wesen des Protestantismus*, 1, 130; Loofs, *Dogmengesch.*, 373; Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3^a, 771 ff.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 753; Erl. ed., 7, p. 317.

⁴ Calvin thought free will "is the greatest difficulty we have with the Papists," *Op.*, XXVIII, p. 526.

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the will of God, which renders just what He wills, the absolute dominion of God over all His creatures—these are all Nominalist doctrines. Man, he conceived, was absolutely passive so far as his salvation was concerned. He emphasizes the absence of any co-operation on man's part in his justification, which is effected by faith alone. "This then is what we assert: Man neither does nor attempts anything in order to remain in this kingdom, but both are works of the Spirit in us, who, without any effort on our part, creates us anew and preserves us in this state. . . . It is He who preaches through us, who takes pity upon the needy and comforts the sorrowful. But what part is there for free will to play? What is left for it to do? Nothing, absolutely nothing."¹ The doctrine of justification and of absolute predestination only are able to give peace.

To accept unquestioningly God's revelations of truth, however irrational they appear, is as much a duty as to submit uncomplainingly to His absolute decrees, however harsh they seem. There is no difference between him and Calvin on this point, though there is between him and Melancthon. God has "an eternal hatred towards men, not merely a hatred of the demerits and works of free will, but a hatred which existed even before the world was made."² This grim Deity inflicts punishment upon those who do not deserve it.³ He has two Wills, His secret Will, and His revealed Will. These two do not always coincide, and it is obvious that no investigation of the secret Will is possible. Luther admits that the latter becomes entirely arbitrary. The demand that God should act, he firmly believes, as we think it right, is equivalent to calling Him to account for being God. We must believe that He is just and good, even when He transgresses the codes of Aristotle⁴ and Justinian. Shall we consider it wrong that He hardens whom He wishes to harden, and has mercy on whom He wills to have mercy?⁵ It is wicked to attempt to judge God's secret inscrutable action. It is better to trust to God than our own free will.⁶

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 754; Erl. ed., 7, pp. 317-8. Cf. D'Argentré, II, p. 86; Lambert, *De arbitrio hominis vere captivo* (1525); *De causis excoecationis*, II, 4.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 724 ff.; Erl. ed., 7, p. 259 ff. Cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, pp. 627-9, 712 ff.; Erl. ed., 7, pp. 147, 150 ff., 259 ff.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 730 ff.; Erl. ed., 7, p. 284 ff.

⁴ Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), I, 15, 40, 59, 84; *Op. exeg.*, 12, 196 ff.; *Sämmtl.*, *Werke*, 7, 63; 15, 4-13. Cf. Döllinger, *Die Reformation*, I, 478.

⁵ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 729 ff.; Erl. ed., 7, p. 363 ff.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 784; Erl. ed., 7, p. 363.

Sometimes it seems amazing that such masterful men as Luther and Calvin believed that their will was the slave of God's. But are not all¹ founders of creeds determinists at bottom? "Since God," Luther maintains, "has taken my salvation upon Himself and wills to save me, not by my own works but by His grace and mercy, I am certain and secure that no devil and no misfortune can tear me out of His hands."² No infallible Church could give such a tone of confidence as this belief which was the foundation of all that either Luther or Calvin accomplished. Each rejoiced in the inspiring conviction that he was raising not only himself but his nation from a lesser to a larger perfection. It was the thrill of joy in this experience which gave them the unconquering energy of desire. The theory of the enslaved will, instead of paralysing activity, furnished a thousand times a stronger incentive to renewed labour, for it was no longer they who laboured, but God Himself. The joy of the Lord was their strength. Once God had justified them by faith, they were simply passive instruments in His hands. In practice the passivity disappeared, for God was henceforth working in them and through them. Could there be a greater stimulus to untiring exertion? History records none other.

Whoever sets up free will cheats Christ of all his merit.³ Whoever advocated free will brings death and the Devil into the world.³ Far from troubling us, the knowledge that God alone acts in us ought to be the sweetest of consolations. Think of the dilemma of the indeterminist. "The human will stands like a saddle-horse between the two. If God mounts into the saddle, man wills and goes forward as God wills . . . but if the Devil is the horseman, then man wills and acts as the Devil wills. He has no power to turn to the one or other of the two riders and offer himself to him, but the riders fight to obtain possession of the animal."⁴ Let us rather thank God, who has discharged for us the heavy task of our salvation and who repels in us the attacks of the demons which our feeble will could not resist even for a moment. "All that I have done," he exclaims, "was not the result of my own will: this God knows, and the world too should have known it long ago. Hence what I am, and by what spirit and council I was drawn into the controversy, is God's business."⁵ For more than ten

¹ John Wesley forms a remarkable exception.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 783; Erl. ed., 7, p. 362.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 779; Erl. ed., 7, p. 356.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 635; Erl. ed., 7, p. 157.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 641; Erl. ed., 7, p. 162.

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years his conscience had demanded, How can you assault the ancient teaching of all men and of the Church, which had been confirmed by the saints, martyrs, and miracles? The sole answer is the teaching of the *De Servo Arbitrio*. "I do not think," he confesses, "any one has ever had to fight with this objection as I had. Even to me it seemed incredible that the impregnable stronghold which had so long withstood the storms should fall. I adjure God and swear by my own soul that had I not been driven, had I not been forced by my own insight and the evidence of things, my resistance would not have ceased to this day."

General practice and general belief indicate that there is free will. Seemingly, he admits, this is so. He is so firmly persuaded that the strands drawn by Divine Omnipotence around the will are of such a nature as not to be perceptible and therefore can be ignored. We believe ourselves to be free, and do not feel any constraint because we surrender ourselves willingly to be guided by God. This, however, is due to the exceptional fineness of the threads which set the human machine in motion. It is easy to understand why twelve years afterwards the author spoke of the *De Servo Arbitrio* as the only book, except the *Catechism*, he would be sorry to see perish.¹ When it perished much of its system went with it. For his determinism is simply a deduction from his doctrine of justification by faith alone.

The heart formed Luther, the head Erasmus. The mysticism of St. Austin moulded the one, the classics the other. The African Father felt his theology, and so did his German follower. The main question with Luther, as with Newman, is the salvation of his soul. The main question with Erasmus is the certainty of truth. To Luther the Law reveals the beginnings of the knowledge of all things, human as well as divine. The truth is that Luther as little requires a general theory as an average Englishman, whereas Erasmus cannot live without such a theory. The humanist resists the natural tendency of the Hellenic mind to dualism. There is a unity which excludes all difference: that is Luther's.² There is also a unity which includes all difference: that is Erasmus's. The warmth of Luther's feelings³ is as evident as the coldness

¹ To Capito at Strassburg, July 9, 1537, *Briefwechsel*, II, p. 47: "Nullum enim agnosco meum justum librum, nisi forte de servo arbitrio et catechismus." In the *Tischreden* (ed. Förstemann), 3, p. 418, Luther says that Erasmus had not refuted *De Servo Arbitrio*, and would "never be able to do so for all eternity." For a modern verdict on its value cf. Lamprecht, V, p. 309.

² P. Wernle, *Die Renaissance des Christentums im 16. Jahrh.*, 30 ff.

³ A. M. Weiss, *Lutherspsychologie*, 223.

of Erasmus's.¹ Luther, like Charles James Fox, excites the emotions of men: Erasmus, like Edmund Burke, fills their mind.² Luther can see the danger of admitting that the will is free: he cannot see the far graver danger of refusing to admit its freedom. Erasmus is as much impressed by the authority of reason as the Cambridge Platonists, especially Whichcote and Culverwel. The Alexandrines, notably Clement and Origen, proclaiming that nothing is to be believed which is unworthy of God, subject Revelation to the test of reason.³ Faith requires reason, reason requires faith; and their ideal of Christianity combines these two potent factors of all spiritual life.⁴ To Clement, as to Erasmus, there is no antithesis between faith and knowledge, between reason and revelation.⁵ The choice between the life of thought and the life of action is a difficult one to make. Whoever chooses the one is apt to wish he had chosen the other, and this is especially true of the student. For him the senate is at least as profitable as the study: so Cicero, and so Luther and Burke were to find it. The genius of Erasmus, to the loss of his immediate practical influence, preferred other flights.

Sir Henry Maine points out the impressive fact that the Greeks were never embarrassed as were the Latins by questions relating to free will and necessity.⁶ Erasmus could not help regarding the image of God in man as his possession for ever, and therefore he believed in a final unity, an organic tie between the two. Luther, on the other hand, regarded man as one thing, through the fall of Adam, he had this image defaced yet remained in a mould on which the Creator could, and did, exert irresistible pressure. Were words invented to express disagreement? Philologically such a view is, of course, untenable, yet when no one loathes a word no one loves it intensely. Words embody ideals, and for ideals men are ready to die. Who will suffer for matters of fact? Who will not suffer for matters of faith? Every one admits that two and two make four, but no one has ever fought and died for this mathematical truth. But for the view that the will is absolutely God's, men have fought and men have died at the stake. Dante pours scorn on Celestine V, the man guilty of the great refusal. The opportunity came to Luther, and

¹ Thausing, *Dürer*, 497-8.

² Cf. Haydon's *Autobiography*, May 23, 1815.

³ Clement, *Strom.*, VI, 15, 124; VII, 16, 96.

⁴ *Pædag.*, I, c. 61; *Strom.* I, c. 89; II, c. 4; VII, c. 10.

⁵ Cf. Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3^d, 849, 863-9; Loois, *Dogmengesch.*, 4, 747.

⁶ *Ancient Law*, p. 342.

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—he seized it. He gave his will unconditionally to God, surrendering himself to Divine guidance. God's Will was greater, grander than his own, and in its power he cheerfully acquiesced. The moment, however, the surrender was complete was the very moment in which Luther began to realize that his work was not his, but God's,¹ and this realization bestowed on him the gift of unflagging purpose.

Luther's trouble was St. Austin's. If election is determined by merit—and it does not matter whether merit arises from works or from faith—then free will, not grace, is the essential condition of salvation. To Luther as to St. Austin this notion was abhorrent. To them grace followed election: election is therefore the essential condition of salvation, and this depends entirely on the will of God. Just as the exigencies of controversy forced Pelagius to emphasize unduly our capacity, so St. Austin felt obliged to disparage it unduly. Erasmus experienced the force of the former temptation slightly,² whereas Luther ever experienced the force of the latter exceedingly.

The quietist in all ages leans to the side of Luther. In the third canto of the *Paradiso* of Dante, according to Piccarda :

In His Will is our peace. To this all things
By Him created, or by nature made,
As to a central Sea, self-motion brings.³

Luther had tried—and tried in vain—to achieve his own righteousness. The result was what St. Paul expressed in the words, "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?"⁴ The reformer accepted the righteousness of Christ and deliverance came. Like St. Paul, he can triumphantly exclaim, "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me."⁵ They that wait on the Lord truly renew their strength. Luther now ran and was not wearied, for faith in Jesus Christ sustained him.⁶ Insisting as he does on the inseparability of faith and hope, Luther is quite content to separate faith and love. Such faith is closely related to that passiveness Wordsworth

¹ Cf. Döllinger, *Die Reformation*, 3, 205 ff., 264, 266, and his *Luther, eine Skizze*, 53; Hess, *Lebens Bullinger*, 1, 404 ff.; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, 1², 319; 2², 10 ff.; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 185; Stintzing, *Ulrich Zasius*, 231, 371.

² Cf. Hagen 1, 307-18; Müller, 234-5; Stichart, 242-4, 247-51, 266-7.

³ *Paradiso*, III, 70.

⁴ Romans vii. 24.

⁵ Philippians iv. 3.

⁶ K. Holl, *Die Rechtfertigungslehre im Lichte der Gesch. des Protestantismus*, 14.

attractively sets forth as part of our attitude to the world of nature :

Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress ;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.
Think you, mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking ?

In striking lines Faber expresses the Lutheran conception :

I wish to have no wishes left,
But to leave all to Thee ;
And yet I wish that Thou shouldst will
That which I wish should be.

Luther's opinions are not far removed from the modern scientific theories which regard man as a machine, though a most skilfully constructed one. The will is caused by cerebral molecular movements over which man has no control. He is not moved hither and thither by a self distinct from the material forces feeding the machine. Huxley compares man to a very cunningly devised clock, whose face with the information upon it corresponds to consciousness which presents us with thoughts, emotions, volitions. Just as we know that the hour and the minute hand of the clock, which mark the time, are obedient and caused by hidden forces and inner movements, whose action they serve to measure and visibly symbolize, so our consciousness but symbolizes the mysterious springs and inner movements of the machinery of the brain and nerves, by which in like manner states of consciousness are finally caused. Luther, however, felt what Lucretius felt when he portrays for us the seizure of our will by some mighty and invisible hand "wrenching us backward into his," though, of course, to the reformer the hand was none other than the hand of God. He was too much a man of the sixteenth century to employ any but Biblical arguments. Now and then in the course of his career he appeals to nature, but here he ignores such forces as heredity, education, and the constant pressure of circumstance. He felt that his work he must do and no other, and this feeling came from the strength of the motive within, but not from the strength of his own free will. According to tradition, when he appeared before the Diet of Worms, 1521, he resolutely held, "Here I stand, I can do no other. God help me."

Is it right, from the Lutheran standpoint, to punish a man

who commits murder? "As if," Bishop Butler remarks, "the necessity which is supposed to destroy the injustice of the murder would not also destroy the injustice of punishing it." Man has, if not will, a certain directive power. He possesses a practical freedom, the freedom of working towards a desired end. Stoic or Islamic resignation is not demanded of him. We are free, the scientist proclaims, and knowledge is our emancipator. Luther was free, but his freedom was achieved by God alone. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is," he gratefully quotes, "there is liberty." In 1524 he wrote to the princes of Saxony: "Your princely graces should not restrain the office of the word. Men should be allowed confidently and freely to preach what they can and against whom they will, for, as I have said, there must be sects and the word of God must be in the field. . . . If their spirit is right, it will not be afraid of us and will stand its ground. If ours is right, it will not be afraid of them nor of any. We should let men have free course."¹

¹ *Briefe*, 2, p. 547 (De Wette).

CHAPTER VIII

THE PEASANTS' WAR AND THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

THE agricultural regime was one that Luther understood: the business one was remote from him. In his *Von Kauffshandlung und Wucher* he spoke strongly on the action of the trading companies. He cared nothing for the foreign trade that brought wares from Calcutta, Calicut and other places. Were not these spices and costly fabrics of silk and cloth of gold only for purpose of luxury and display? What use did they serve? Did they not remove money from the people and their rulers? Here he anticipated a favourite argument of the mercantile school of the seventeenth century. True, patriarchs like Abraham bought and sold, but if they did they bought and sold cattle, wool, grain, butter and milk. These are God's gifts which He raises from the earth and distributes among men. The new trade simply means the "throwing away of our gold and silver into foreign countries."¹ As he anticipated the mercantile theory, so he also obviously anticipated the Physiocratic theory. Nature worked along with man on the soil, and there was no such co-operation in business. The profit from trade is indeed unnatural.² Moreover, a merchant can "in a short time become so rich as to be able to buy up emperors and kings."³ This attitude is no new one. In the *An den christlichen Adel* Luther denounces the trading companies and the usury they exacted. He disavows acquaintance with figures, and cannot understand how a hundred florins can gain twenty annually. Here appears the mediæval notion that money was barren metal. It is far more important to till the soil than to trade. "It is, indeed," he is persuaded, "high time that

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 15, p. 294 ff.; Erl. ed., 22, p. 201 ff.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 466; Erl. ed., 21, p. 357. Cf. Ward, *Darstellung*, 73, 83; Krause, *Eoban Hessus*, 2, 107.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 15, p. 312 ff.; Erl. ed., 22, p. 223.

a bit were put in the mouth of the Fuggers and other companies." ¹

The reformer's humanistic training appears in his statement that "we despise the arts and languages, but refuse to do without the foreign wares which are neither necessary nor profitable to us. . . Is not this a proof that we are true Germans, i.e. fools and beasts?" He insists that God "has bestowed upon us, as He has bestowed upon other nations, sufficient wool, hair, flax and everything else for becoming clothing, but now men squander fortunes on silk, satin, cloth of gold and absurd foreign goods." ² He anticipates the doctrine of Lassalle when he holds that wages tend to the cost of the maintenance of the worker. It seemed to him that the price of an article depended on the cost of labour involved in making it, and in the state of society in which he lived such a crude criterion was not so unfair as it looks. The scholastic notion of a just price was a leading idea in his mind, and he thought that it was possible to fix this price. Profit might be made, but not such "as might cause loss to another." ³ He opposed the idea of buying cheaply and selling dearly: such a practice was "to open door and window to hell." ⁴ He also opposed the artificial scarcity which merchants like the Fuggers aimed at creating.

There was a new world around him: the effects of the discovery of Columbus could not be undone. Men were sending their goods no longer to Venice and the Mediterranean but to the north, that is, to the Atlantic Ocean. Money might be as barren as Luther thought it; the merchant class, however, stood in urgent need of it, and they offered high rates. Luther was unaware of the possibilities that lay hidden behind the discovery of America, still he did see that usury was growing, though he did not diagnose the cause with sufficient accuracy. It is hard to say whether he hated the devil or the Pope the more. It gave him peculiar pleasure to attack both simultaneously. In his *An den christlichen Adel* he exclaimed that "the greatest misfortune of the German nation is easily the traffic in interest. . . . The devil invented it, and the Pope, by giving his sanction to it, has done untold evil throughout the world." ⁵ He felt as strongly on this matter in 1539, when he published his *An die Pfärhernnn wider den Wucher zu predigen*, as he felt in 1520.

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 466; Erl. ed., 21, p. 357.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 465 ff.; Erl. ed., 21, p. 356.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 15, p. 296; Erl. ed., 22, p. 204.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 15, p. 295; Erl. ed., 22, p. 202.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 466; Erl. ed., 16, p. 356.

He held the same opinion in 1542.¹ He would refuse usurers the sacrament, absolution and Christian burial.² He quotes such texts as Exodus xxii. 25; Leviticus xxv. 36; Deuteronomy xxiii. 19; St. Matthew v. 42; and, above all, St. Luke vi. 35. Some say that the New Testament verses are only counsels, not commands: Luther maintains strongly that they are commands which bind men to obey them. Still, he allows some exceptions to his rigid rule. As the Emperor Justinian allowed mitigated usury to men in urgent need of money, Luther is willing to permit it where the loan is a work of mercy to the needy. Here is a case in point: In 1532 the widow of Wolfgang Jörger offered him 500 florins for the use of poor students of divinity in Wittenberg, asking him in what form she ought to give her bequest. He advised her to lend it at interest, and in this advice Melancthon and his friends concurred.³

In the midst of speculations like these came the explosion of the Peasants' Revolt. Its primary motive was economic. The tyranny of the lords, the serfdom,⁴ the *corvée*, the game laws, the heavy taxes, the tithes had long pressed severely on the mass of the people. To these old grievances were added new motives in the prevalent intellectual unrest, and in the powerful leaven of the new religious teaching. That Luther had constantly inculcated the duty of obedience to the civil powers was manifest. That he had denounced the extreme wickedness of sedition was equally manifest. At the same time his democratic message of the brotherhood of man and the excellence of the humblest Christian worked in many ways undreamed of by himself. His gospel of Christian liberty was a mighty solvent. For the spiritual freedom which he taught, multitudes substituted freedom from political oppression, from social injustice and from economic burdens. His assaults upon many features of the existing order, his criticisms of the growing luxury of the wealthier classes, his denunciations of the rapacity and greed of the merchants and the commercial companies and of the tyranny and corruption of rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, all tended to inflame the populace and spread impatience and discontent. Roman law was widening its far-reaching influence.⁵ Like heady wine, the

¹ Cf. the *Tischreden* (Mathesius), p. 259; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 57, p. 360.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 23, p. 285.

³ Cf. his letter to Dorothy Jörger, March 7, 1532, Erl. ed., 54, p. 277; *Briefwechsel*, 9, p. 160. Cf. Evers, 3, 210-27; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 16, pp. 82-93, 97-8.

⁴ Cf. Maurer, *Gesch. der Fronhöfe*, II, pp. 80, 88-9.

⁵ Egelhaff, *Deutsche Geschichte*, I, 544 ff.; Lamprecht, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 5, 99 ff.; Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, passim; Brunner, *Grundzüge der deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*, 216.

reading of the Bible intoxicated and exalted them, leading not to revolution but to absolute anarchy. Its influence was as much indirect as direct.¹ For some Anabaptists, like other men from the Gnostics to Schleiermacher, denied the necessity of reading it. There was as much connexion between Luther and the outbreak as there was between Hus and the extreme fanatics of his party, or between Wyclif and Wat Tyler. "The people," he informed the nobles, "neither can nor will endure your tyranny any longer. God will not endure it; the world is not what it once was when you drove and hunted men like wild beasts." The extraordinary response he had met with, the confusion into which all Germany had been thrown by the Reformation, and the widespread weakening of respect for traditional authority resulting therefrom, made 1525 seem a peculiarly favourable time for the readjustment of the various classes of society to each other.

"Beginning in the autumn of 1524, in the highlands between the sources of the Rhine and the Danube, the rebellion swept north through Franconia and Swabia. The demands of the insurgents were embodied in Twelve Articles, drawn up not later than February 1525, by a Swabian, Sebastian Lotzer. The leading principle of this document is the entire assimilation of civil and divine law; all claims are supported by an appeal to the gospel, under the rule of which the peasants declare it to be their intention to live. The articles propose the free election by each parish of its pastor, the abolition of serfdom, the reduction of taxes and tithes, the reduction of exorbitant rents, the restoration to the community of lands unjustly appropriated by private persons, extra payment for extra labour, freedom to hunt, fish, and cut wood in the forests, the abolition of the heriot,"² and the substitution of the old German for the new Roman law.

In response to the Twelve Articles of the Swabian peasants Luther sent forth his *Exhortation to Peace*.³ The revolt had broken out and the horrors of Wittenberg had taken place, though of this the writer was unaware when he wrote his hasty pamphlet. The second was merely one sheet, entitled *Against the Murderous, Thieving Hordes of Peasants*, or more shortly

¹ On the effects of sermons and pamphlets on the revolt cf. Hagen, II, 155-227; Arx, *Gesch. des Cantons von St. Gallen*, II, 492; Baumann, *Quellen*, 377; Jörg, 191-200, 251, 292; Riggenbach, 198; Schade, *Satiren u. Pasquille*, II, 1-41, 277-88; Friedrich, *Astrologie und Reformation*, 63-78, 156-8; Baur, 131-44, 217-9, 512-4.

² H. P. Smith, *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, p. 157 f.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 279 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², p. 271 ff.

Against the Insurgent Peasants. It was composed before the complete defeat in the decisive days of May. In it Luther, like the Tudors, sacrificed liberty to order. The last is the *Circular Letter concerning the Hard Booklet against the Peasants*, published at the time when the revolt had been crushed in blood.

In the *Exhortation to Peace* the pamphleteer seeks to put the truth before the peasants and their lords, and he addresses each side in turn. He reminds the lords that "God has so ordained it that your furious raging neither can nor shall any longer be endured. You must become different and give way to the Word of God ; if you refuse to do so willingly, then you will be forced to do it by violence and riot. If these peasants do not accomplish it, others must."¹ They are right in their demand to choose their own pastors, and in their repudiation of the heriot. They are wrong in their desire to divide the tithes between the priest and the poor : it is simply robbery, for the tithes belong to the Government. They are also wrong in craving the abolition of serfdom on the ground that Christ has freed all : this makes Christian freedom a carnal thing, and is therefore unjustifiable. The gospel is concerned with spiritual, not temporal, affairs. Earthly society cannot exist without inequalities ; the true Christian finds his Christian liberty and his opportunity for Christian service in the midst of them and in spite of them.²

Some say that the rebellion has been caused by doctrine of the prophet, but he avers that he has always taught obedience to the powers that be. Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword and every soul should be subject to the authorities in fear and honour. "If the Government is bad and intolerable, that is no excuse for riot and insurrection, for to punish evil belongs not to every one but to the civil authority who bears the sword." Suffering tyranny is a cross given by God. Luther will pray for them. Christianity comports only with passive resistance. This is the leading feature of the argument, though the remarks on the lords were scarcely seasonable. If they "forbid the preaching of the Gospel and oppress the people so unbearably, then they deserve that God should cast them from their thrones."³ He concludes that "tyrants seldom die in their beds ; as a rule they perish by a bloody death. Since it is certain that you govern tyrannically

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 293 ff. ; Erl. ed., 24², p. 273 ff.

² Cf. C. F. Jäger, *Karlstadt*, 273 ; Barge, *Karlstadt*, I, 355 ; K. Müller, *Gemeinde u. Obrigkeit nach Luther*, 29.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 300 ; Erl. ed., 24², p. 277.

and savagely, forbidding the preaching of the Gospel and fleeing and oppressing the people, there is no hope or comfort for you but to perish as those like you have perished.”¹ The peasants afforded him more satisfaction as they grounded their claims on the Bible. It was only four years since his translation of the New Testament had appeared, and already its leaven was at work. When the peasants and he differed in their exegesis, this satisfaction becomes dimmed.² The inner light of the mystic and that of Münzer were widely apart, and Luther came to regard Münzer's fanatics as possessed by the devil. Extreme men, like this leader, urged the divine duty of ruthless slaughter. In his journeys through the rebellious districts Luther witnessed the violence, anarchy and rapine which characterize class warfare. Moved to alarm by these excesses he issues the pamphlet *Against the Insurgent Peasants*,³ about May 4, 1525.

He lives in the moment and takes no thought for the morrow. Sufficient unto the day is the change in view thereof. As Carlyle held that the skins of the French aristocracy bound the new edition of Rousseau's works, so the skins of the German peasants bound the new version of Luther's ideas. Is it not the prerogative of genius to be fertile in contradiction, to nourish its development on inconsistencies? He knew not whither he was going—he did not wish to know. Forces, incalculable forces, were driving him. God would provide the opportunity: God would reveal how it ought to be used. Had the men who executed Louis XVI been content with the Tennis Court Oath, the House of Bourbon might still be reigning in Paris.

The fates of theories are strange, and if the father of one of them could see the developments of some of his children, he would stand aghast. There is a statement of the theory of the Social Pact in the *De Regimine Principum* of St. Thomas Aquinas. To him, as to Hooker in his *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, it furnishes a cogent argument on behalf of absolute monarchy. To Locke it affords a convincing statement on the right of the individual to set a limit to the power of the State. To Rousseau it yields a clear account in favour of an extreme form of democracy. These doctrines are divergent: the Anabaptist application of Luther's was simply more thorough. The revolutionary drew back in horror.

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 329 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², p. 296 ff.

² K. Müller, *Luther und Karlstadt*, 218.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 344 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², p. 303 ff.

Blood, he argues, should be shed for three reasons: the peasants have broken their oath of fealty; they have rioted and plundered; and they have covered their terrible sins with the name of the Gospel. "Therefore let all who are able hew them down, slaughter and stab them, openly or in secret, and remember that there is nothing more poisonous, noxious, and utterly diabolical than a rebel. You must kill him as you would a mad dog; if you do not fall upon him, he will fall upon you and the whole land."¹ "I believe that there are no rebels left in hell, but all of them have entered into the peasants."² So strange are the times that a prince may merit heaven more certainly by shedding blood than by saying prayers. "Thou, O God, must judge and act. It may be that whoever is killed on the side of the authorities is really a martyr in God's cause."³

Indulgence is to be shown to those led astray: many people joined the rebels against their will and under diabolical guiding. Terms then are to be offered to these men. Yet, he adds, "I will not forbid such rulers as are able to chastise and slay the peasants without previously offering them terms, even though the Gospel does not permit it."⁴ That he had completely lost his mental balance is witnessed by the remark that "a pious Christian ought to be willing to endure a hundred deaths rather than yield a hair's breadth to the cause of the peasants."⁵

At the battle of Frankenhausen, May 15, 1525, Philip of Hesse bore the sword to some purpose, for the rebels were utterly routed, many of them flying in the wildest panic. In this war at least a hundred thousand peasants were slaughtered, and from 1523 to 1546 no less than thirty thousand Anabaptists suffered in Holland and Friesland.⁶ Münzer was captured and put to death.⁷ His rising had inflicted so much damage that Luther and Melanchthon expressed their regret that he had been tortured only once.⁸ The latter was sorry that the beaten man had not been forced to confess that the Devil had inspired his revelations. Münzer had aimed at the extermination of all impious persons and the establishment of a kingdom of God

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 358; Erl. ed., 24², p. 304.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 358; Erl. ed., 24², p. 305.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 360; Erl. ed., 24², p. 308.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 359; Erl. ed., 24², p. 306.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 361; Erl. ed., 24², p. 308.

⁶ Geissel, *Kaiserdum*, p. 315, n. 1. Cf. Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, pt. 1, chap. iii, 26 ff., 30.

⁷ Förstemann, *Neues Urkundenbuch*, 228 ff., 232, 245 ff.; Seidemann, 41, 48, 129, 146 f.; Strobel, 162.

⁸ Contrast Luther's letter to John Rühel, May 23, 1525.

formed of all the righteous on earth. This rather than re-baptism was the distinguishing tenet of the Anabaptists.

In his *Circular Letter concerning the Hard Booklet against the Peasants*¹ to Chancellor Caspar Müller, Luther indulges in an exceedingly one-sided analysis of the character of the rebels. The analysis is all the more interesting, since it comes from a peasant's son. "What," he asks, "is more ill-mannered than a foolish peasant or a common man when he has enough and is full, and gets power in his hands?" "An ass must be beaten and the rabble governed by force. God knew this well, and therefore He gave the rulers not a fox's tail but a sword."² The reactionary pleads that "a rebel does not deserve a reasonable answer, for he will not accept it; the only way to answer such foul-mouthed rascals is with the fist till their noses dribble. The peasants"—here is an aggravation of their offence—"would not listen to him or let him speak, therefore their ears must be opened by musket bullets so that their heads may fly into the air."

He holds strongly that rebellion deserves neither mercy nor judgment, that there is nothing for it but to slaughter without compunction.³ He had never spoken of acting against the conquered and humbled, but solely of smiting those actually engaged in rebellion. His adversaries profess astonishment when he did not admonish the authorities who were not pious. His retort is that it was no part of his duty. "I say once more for the third time that I wrote for the benefit of those authorities who were disposed to act rightly in a Christian manner."⁴ Erasmus, who had been watching the rebellion with loathing, said to him: "We are now reaping the fruit of your spirit. You do not acknowledge the rebels, but they acknowledge you, and it is well known that many who boast of the name of the Evangel have been instigators of this horrible revolt. It is true that you have attempted in your grim booklet against the peasants to allay this suspicion, but nevertheless you cannot dispel the general conviction that this mischief was caused by the books you sent forth against the monks and bishops in favour of evangelical freedom and against the tyrants, more especially those written in German."⁵ Had

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 375 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², p. 310 ff.

² *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, pp. 392-4; Erl. ed., 24², pp. 322, 324.

³ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 398 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², p. 330. Cf. Luther's letter to Nicholas Amsdorf, May 30, 1525.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 399 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², pp. 330-3. Cf. Luther's letter to Archbishop Albert of Mayence, July 21, 1525.

⁵ *Hyperaspistes*, *Opp.*, I, p. 1032.

the writer cast his thoughts back to the year 1511, for instance, he would have remembered that other authors as well as the one he censures were then denouncing monks and bishops.

With this *Circular Letter* it is useful to compare *A Circular to the Princes of Saxony concerning the Spirit of Revolt*,¹ July 1524. In it Luther examines Münzer's apologia for the deeds of his followers. The Anabaptist leader urged the precepts of the Old Testament found in Genesis xi. 2, Deuteronomy vii. 12 and xii. 2-3. Luther meets this appeal in a most striking fashion. He does not deny that such precepts remain, but he points out that "a certain Divine command then existed for such acts of destruction which is not given to us at the present day."

This comparative view of the worth of the Bible was an amazing one to take, and had it prevailed countless lives might have been saved from violent deaths. Unfortunately its enunciator did not perceive the full significance of the truth he uttered. "I see something," he confesses, "which the blessed Augustine saw not, and those that come after me will see that which I see not." He implies his belief in the element of growth in divine revelation, a view that cuts the roots of intolerance. For growth implies change, a readjustment to the new and better conception of God. He came as near to the great principle of evolution in the books of the Bible as Herbert Spencer came to the principle of evolution itself before Darwin discovered it; but neither Luther nor Spencer understood fully the implications of their views. In his *Table-talk* Luther is at pains to explain the transitory authority of the Mosaic law. "We must," he points out, "and do reject and condemn those that so highly boast of the rites and proceedings in Moses' law (*Judicialia*) in temporary affairs, for we have our imperial and country laws under which we live and whereto we are sworn. . . . Moses' law found and obliged only the Jews in that place which God made choice of. . . . Therefore let us recommend and leave Moses to his laws, except only the *Moralia*, which God hath planted in nature, as the Ten Commandments, which concern God's true worship and service, and a civil life."² The view is as clear as Erasmus's; for both recognize the fact that the Bible is a library containing sixty-six books written in widely different ages by widely different people. It is singular that one who enhanced the authority of the law so considerably

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 15, p. 210 ff.; Erl. ed., 53, p. 256 ff.; *Briefwechsel*, 4, p. 372.

² *Table-talk*, chap. 12, par. 1.

looks askance on the political activity of the Prophets, which was "so much hay, straw, and wood among the genuine silver and gold" of their labours.

In the *Circular to the Princes of Saxony concerning the Spirit of Revolt*, he is persuaded that, according to God's ordinance, the princes are the "rulers of the world," and that Christ had said "My kingdom is not of this world," thus assuming the standpoint of his treatise *On the Secular Power*. Therefore he draws the conclusion that it is urgent for them to prevent such disorders and to anticipate the revolt. His cause was from God, Münzer's was not. What was the proof thereof? The sole proof advanced was the reassertion of his divine mission. So confident was he of this that he offered toleration to the Anabaptists. "Do not," he requested, "scruple to let them preach freely." In the heat of the contest with Münzer he held that "all should preach stoutly and freely as they were able and against whomsoever they pleased. . . . Let the spirits fall upon one another and fight it out."¹ The fittest would survive, for truth would conquer.

It is difficult to believe that the Erasmus who wrote the *Praise of Folly* is also the man who could upbraid another for speaking strongly against monks and bishops. It is far more difficult to believe that the Luther who wrote the statesmanlike *Circular to the Princes of Saxony* also wrote the prejudiced *Circular Letter concerning the Hard Booklet against the Peasants*.² They seem to come from two distinct types of ability, yet they are composed by the same man at an interval of less than a year. Had a leader of Luther's transcendent influence adhered to the opinion that the Old Testament possessed a lower value than the New, persecution would never have assumed the proportions it ultimately did. The New Testament would correspondingly have been exalted; and its principle of love, instead of the old one of hate, would have modified the attitude of one set of men to another when they found that their beliefs did not altogether agree. Jesus did not employ force in order to spread his message. "Compel them to come in," He once said, but only *one* man was sent to carry out the command. Luther's attitude would have been all the more significant; for Erasmus was a man of the New Testament. Hebrew he did not know any more than German. The cause of toleration

¹ To the Elector Frederick and Duke John of Saxony, July 1524, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 265; *Briefwechsel*, 4, p. 372.

² A. Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 55-9; K. Müller, *Kirche, Gemeinde und Obrigkeit nach Luther*, 140; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 715, 717, 794; P. Drews, *Entsprach das Staatskirchentum dem Ideale Luthers?* 31 ff.

would thus have received the influence of the Saviour, not that of the legislator.

Luther was, however, so absorbed in his conception of religion that he completely failed to recognize the inner meaning of the vision flashing across him for a moment and then disappearing for ever. He also failed adequately to understand the social and economic evils of the day. His task was to free men from what he regarded as the traditional ecclesiastical bondage. Peasant though he was by birth, his sympathies lay with the middle rather than with the lower classes, with the bourgeoisie rather than with the proletariat and the peasantry. In Germany as in England, the Reformation was essentially a middle-class movement. His position in 1524 and 1525 was an immensely serious one. He could not help seeing that his own teaching was influencing the attitude of the working classes to the established order, as well as to the established church. On the other hand the revolution threatened to assume such proportions that his infant following would be overwhelmed.¹ Therefore he tells the rebels, "God would rather suffer the rulers who do what is wrong than the mob whose cause is just. The reason is that when Master Omnes wields the sword and makes war on the pretence that he is in the right, things fare badly."²

Luther recognized the stern necessity of putting down anarchy which veiled itself under the plea of liberty of conscience. To the reformer it was not liberty: it was sheer licence. Metternich shrewdly remarked that Napoleon III could not be Emperor "par la grâce de Dieu" and "par la volonté nationale." Luther aimed at leadership on the ground that God reported to him. His message and the national will supported him in carrying it out. Like Napoleon III, he found in the Peasants' War the impossibility of combining and reconciling the two reasons on which his leadership rested. The contradiction wrought the downfall of Napoleon III, and

¹ On Luther's share in the revolt cf. E. Brandenburg, *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte* (Halle, 1901), 21; Döllinger, *Die Reformation*, 3, 265; P. Schreckenbach, *Luther u. der Bauernkrieg*, 8, 45; F. von Bezold, *Gesch. der deutschen Reformation* and his *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, B. 2, Abt. 5, 1, p. 68; Janssen-Pastor, 4, 56 ff. (Eng. ed.); Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 697, 701, 714, 717, 792; Drews, *Entsprach das Staatskirchentum dem Ideale Luthers?* 31; F. Hermann, *Evangelische Regungen zu Mainz in der ersten Zeiten der Reformation*, 296-8; W. Vogt, *Die Vorgesch. des Bauernkrieges*, 142; N. Paulus, *Barthol. Usingen*, 102; W. Stolze, *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg*, p. v; W. Maurenbrecher, *Gesch. der kath. Reformation*, 1, 257, and his *Studien u. Skizzen*, 22; Barge, *Karlstadt*, 2, 357; Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 29, 62.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 50, p. 294.

it almost wrought the downfall of Luther, till he threw in his lot with the prince against the people.

As More felt in his own day, as Burke felt long after, Luther felt that when a separation was effected between security—the security of society—and liberty, neither was safe. Sir Thomas More pleaded for toleration till toleration endangered the commonwealth. Edmund Burke argued for liberty in America: he refused to argue for licence in France. So, too, Martin Luther wrote on behalf of the freedom of a Christian man till revolt threatened that and much else besides. More was a conservative, Luther was a conservative, and Burke was a conservative. They were three of the great conservatives of history. The practice of all three seemed to depart widely from their creed. Coleridge, however, insists that in Burke's writings at the beginning of the American Revolution and in those at the beginning of the French Revolution, the principles are the same and the deductions are the same. The evidence is not nearly so strong in the case of Luther, yet it might be urged in his defence, as in More's and Burke's, that had his knowledge of the facts been ample and, above all, had not his experience been cast into such a whirlpool as the Peasants' Revolt, he might have arrived at conclusions far different from that of his pamphlets of 1524-5. Luther regarded Thomas Münzer's policy of revolution just as More regarded Thomas Cromwell's policy of reformation. Like Joseph II, the German reformer was tempted to take the second step before he had taken the first, but the moment he foresaw the consequences of raising his foot to take the second step he replaced his foot on the first step. He was not going to witness the devastation of Saxony by a spirit which, in the words of Burke, "breaks the locality of public affections."¹

The experience of the Russian Revolution since March 1917 enables one to grasp the point of view of Luther in 1525 with additional insight. Luther was convinced, and very deeply convinced, that behind all human law lay a divine law, a divine order of society. Peasants are fitted to obey princes who are fitted to rule: status, not contract, was the ideal of society he decidedly favoured. The farmer may only rebel when he must rebel, that is, when the conditions are intolerable. The intolerable condition in 1525 was the danger that the Lutheran Gospel might lose and that the Peasants' Gospel might win. Luther averted the danger by

¹ Burke, *Works*, I, 564-5. Cf. Tocqueville, *Ancien Régime*, 15.

the sacrifice of the peasants—such is the irony of history—on the altar of individualism. He must preserve order, he must preserve peace in order that his message might have free course.

With piercing insight Shakespeare writes :

The heavens themselves, the planets and this centre,
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office and custom, in all line of order :
And therefore is the glorious planet, Sol,
In noble eminence enthroned and sphered
Amidst the other : whose med'cinable eye
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,
And posts, like the commandment of a king,
Sans check, to good and bad. But when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues and what portents ! what mutiny !
What raging of the sea ! shaking of the earth !
Commotion in the winds, frights, changes, horrors,
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixture ! O, when the degree is shak'd,
Which is the ladder of all high designs,
The enterprise is sick ! How could communities,
Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,
Peaceful commerce from divisable shores,
The primogeniture and due of birth,
Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,
But by degree, stand in authentic place ?
Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark ! what discord follows ! Each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy : the bounded waters
Should lift their bosom higher than the shores,
And make a sop of all this solid globe :
Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead :
Force should be right : or, rather, right and wrong
(Between whose endless jar justice resides)
Should lose their names, and so should justice too.
Then everything includes itself in power,
Power into will, will into appetite :
And appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And, last, eat up himself. Great Agamemnon,
This chaos, when degree is suffocate,
Follows the choking.¹

Force at last was the only remedy. But the pity was that once Luther prescribed this medicine he saw no need to stint the quantity. When Talleyrand charged the young diplomatist to beware of too much zeal, he gave a lesson from which Luther could have derived much profit. He was right, completely right, in

¹ *Troilus and Cressida*, act i, sc. 3.

advocating that the prince should not at that emergency bear the sword in vain, but he ought to have encouraged the return of the sword to its sheath at an earlier date. In later years he contemplated his conduct during the revolt, and he did not regret the advice he had tendered. "Preachers," he says, "are the biggest murderers about, for they admonish the authorities to fulfil their duty and punish the wicked. I, Martin Luther, slew all the peasants in the rebellion, for I said they should be slain; all their blood is on my head. But I cast it on our Lord God, who commanded me to speak in this way."¹ Certainly his belief in his enslaved will lightened his burden of responsibility. It is always hard to reconcile order and progress, but to him order was heaven's first law. He would cordially have endorsed the dictum of Tocqueville that Christianity orders that men should render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but it discourages the question whether Cæsar is entitled to the things. The outstanding effect of the rebellion was to drive him decisively to the side of authority: he could no longer afford to seem to take a revolutionary attitude.² The possibility that the Anabaptists ought to be allowed freedom of discussion was henceforth dismissed.

The book *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, 1525, belongs to another class of opinion. In his account of *The Secular Power*, 1523, he maintained that "no prince may make war on his overlord, such as the king or the emperor or any other feudal superior, but must allow him to seize what he pleases. For the higher authorities must not be resisted by force, but merely bringing them to the knowledge of the truth. If they are converted it is well; if not, you are free from blame and suffer injustice for God's sake."³ Now of course the most urgent need was the protection of the people "against the devils who were teaching through the mouth of the Anabaptist prophets." Compulsion by sword and by law were the means of protection. The secular power must force them to be outwardly pious. The law must be held over their heads in the same way that "Wild beasts are held in check by bars and chains in order that outward peace may prevail among the people; for this purpose the temporal authorities are ordained, and it is God's will that they should be honoured and feared."⁴ He deprecates

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 59, p. 284 (*Tischreden*). Cf. Cordatus, *Tagebuch*, p. 307; Mathesius, *Aufzeichnungen*, p. 290.

² T. Kolde, *Friedrich der Weise und die Anfänge der Reformation*, 34.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 22, p. 100 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 29, p. 140. Melancthon's attitude was similar. Cf. *Ein Schrift Philippi Melancthon wider die Artikel der Bawerschafft*, 1525, in

any armed resistance to the supreme authority, even should the Gospel be oppressed. The Council of Erfurt resolved in 1525 "that it was by no means its mind, desire, or intention to oppose the people without necessity, contrary to evangelical equity and right, or to refuse them anything which it was its duty to permit or tolerate."

In 1529 he still maintained that "even though the authorities act unjustly, God wills that they should be obeyed without deceit unless indeed they insist publicly on doing what is wrong towards God or men; for to suffer unjustly harms no man's soul, indeed it is profitable to it."¹ The wine of success turned his head from such an attitude. As his position increased in strength after the Diet of Augsburg, 1530, his unwillingness to employ compulsion disappeared. Addressing the protesting princes, he tells them they must act as so many Constantines in defence of their cause, and not wince at bloodshed in order to protect the evangel against the furious soul-destroying attacks of the new Licinii. His inconsistency he glosses over by declaring that he was ready to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, but that when Charles V forbade "what God in his word had taught and commanded," then he was exceeding his duty. Under these circumstances, "God still retained what was his," and "they, the tyrants, had lost everything and suffered shipwreck."² The faithful must accordingly forcibly oppose the action of the temporal power.

Erasmus saw in the Anabaptists the one exception to his law of toleration. They were seditious, and in no case could he allow sedition. Therefore "the Anabaptists must under no circumstances be tolerated. The Apostles order us to obey civil authorities, and those men are loth to obey Christian princes. Let communion of goods in charity, let the possession and right of dispensing continue in the hands of those appointed. If they are so much in doubt among themselves about the Eucharist that they daily bring forth new and absurd opinions, how much wiser it would be to continue in the old beliefs until either the General Council or a revelation from on high reveal something definite. Any scruple about the worship and toleration of it is easily solved. No person worships the Eucharist

Corp. Reform., XX, pp. 641-2; also *ibid.*, I, pp. 741, 747; Hartfelder, *Bauernkrieg*, pp. 184-9; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 29, 136; Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette),² 2, 611-2, 618.

¹ In the sermon on good works to Duke John of Saxony, *Werke*, Weim. ed., p. 259; Erl. ed., 16², p. 196.

² In a sermon of 1532, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 3², p. 182.

except the whole Christ is in it, nor is any one so silly as to worship the human nature of Christ instead of the divinity. But the divinity is everywhere present. The abuses of this sacrament can be corrected. Formerly it was not shown to the world, but kept shut up in a particular place. It was not carried round at the festive games or through the fields by a priest on horseback. It was extended only to those who wished to partake. Now in England there is no house, no inn, I might almost say no brothel, where the sacrifice is not offered. Courtesans sell these emblems. In other matters likewise, if moderation be employed on all sides, perhaps these disturbances will gradually return to a somewhat tranquil state. This plan the Juliers-Cleves leader adopted, and he admits that the result was successful. Nor do I doubt that your state will fare likewise if the ecclesiastics allow it. I am afraid that they may do their own business as far as safety permits.”¹

The stormy year of 1525 obliged Luther in his discussion with Schwenckfeld to examine the amount of truth in the contention of the latter that the true Christian must be separated from the false, and that excommunication must go hand in hand with the Gospel. With this separatist conception the reformer always manifested sympathy, and now he announced his intention of keeping a register of the faithful and of having a watch set over their conduct. In the closing months of 1525 he composed the *Deutsche Messe und Ordnung Gottis Diensts*.²

In spite of opposition from Philip of Hesse, Luther insisted on the retention of the form of the Mass he adapted, and he refused to hear of the substitution of German for Latin in this service.³ Strongly as he believed in the Invisible Church, he no less strongly believed in the Visible Church, insisting that the two distinguishing marks of the latter were the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the two great sacraments.⁴ His conservatism is evident in the keeping of the sacred vestments, the lighted candles on the altar, the elevation of the Host, and the chalice, the slight though significant

¹ *Epist.*, DXII. On the attitude of Erasmus on Luther in and after 1525 cf. Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 2, 140 ff.; Luther's *Briefe* (De Wette), 3, 87, 98, 106, 210, 212, 427, 461 f., 569; 4, 497, 508 ff.; *Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), 106; Seidemann, *Beiträge*, 204 ff.; *Corp. Reform.*, 1, 272 ff., 280, 793 ff., 893; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 30, 6; *Tischreden* (Förstemann and Bindseil), 3, 408; Lauterbach, 114; J. Mathesius, *Historien*, VII, 313 f.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 19, p. 70 ff.; Erl. ed., 22, p. 227 ff.

³ *Sämmtl. Werke*, 22, p. 228. Cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 1, pp. 842, 845.

⁴ *Sämmtl. Werke*, 14, p. 278.

changes in the rites and hymns.¹ The forms then were the same: the substance, however, was wholly different, for the Canon of the Mass, containing the fixed rule according to which the sacrifice is offered, was omitted. The fervent believer in the priesthood of the laity could allow no words to be employed which even faintly suggested the idea of a sacrificing priesthood.²

In the preface to his German Mass and Service Book, he pleads for toleration. "Before all else, I would cordially ask and for the sake of the Lord, that all who see or would follow this order of ours in the worship of God would not impose it as a law binding anybody's conscience thereto, but use their Christian freedom at pleasure, as where, and as long as matters make it seemly." This plea for consideration, this argument for liberty, is in keeping with the view that whatever is not against Scripture might be allowed. What the Bible alloweth it commandeth. If such freedom is not permitted forms and customs harden into law which is often like that of the Medes and Persians in altering not. To Henry VIII he had said, "Free, free, free we will and ought to be in all things outside Scripture." The limits of such freedom he defined in 1544: there was the utmost liberty in reference to all things neither commanded nor forbidden. This policy of letting indifferent ceremonies alone was alien to the spirit of the age. It was such a policy that had Luther seen its developments he would have shrunk from it.

If the new Mass is held publicly in the churches, many are present who are not within the fold. It would be a far different matter if the true believers assembled together "with their names registered and meeting together in some house or other," where prayer, reading of the Bible, and the receiving of the sacrament would regularly take place, and "penalties, correction, expulsion by the ban, made use of according to the law of Christ."³ The difficulty is that "I have not yet the necessary

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, I, pp. 991-2; Richter, *Kirchenordnung*, I, p. 227 ff. Cf. Luther's letter to Chancellor Brück, April 1541 (*De Wette*), 5, p. 338; also Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 578; Richter, *Kirchenordnung*, I, 2 ff.; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, II, 239-41, 254, 280; Schmidt, *N. Hausmann*, 27 f.; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 4, 277; II, 22, 201, 241, 290 ff.; 22, 151 ff., 241, 290 ff.; 29, 113 ff., 181, 27, 35; 157; *Briefe* (*De Wette*), 2, 283, 300, 308 f., 314 f., 354, 378, 388 ff., 421 f., 431, 436, 503, 529 ff., 554, 564 ff., 569, 572; 3, 78, 294, 353; 4, 210; *Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), 55, 73, 76; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 620 ff., 628 ff., 661 ff.; Spalatin, *Lat. Annalen*, 618 ff., 640; Seckendorf, I, 274 ff.

² *Sämmtl. Werke*, 28, pp. 304-5. Cf. Pastor, *Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 9 ff.

³ On the share then taken by the Visitation of 1527 in promoting this idea cf. *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 399; *Briefwechsel*, 6, p. 32. Cf. Luther's letter to Tileman Schnabel and the other Hessian clergy, July 26, 1533.

number of people for this, nor do I see many who are desirous of trying it." He sorely desired to unite chosen Christians in a congregation apart from the ordinary members of the flock, thereby running contrary to the masterly contention of the *Freedom of a Christian Man*. In glowing language he had set forth the unity of the life of the humblest follower and that of the greatest saint. Now he narrows the whole conception to the small body of the faithful. They were to be the leaven to leaven the whole lump. From this exceptional principle he never departed. He beheld Saxony and he beheld the rest of Germany, but Europe as a whole escaped his vision. The boundaries of the world were being widened on an unprecedented scale. Simultaneously his boundaries contracted. From the Holy Roman Empire he came to see Saxony or Hesse. For a mighty State embracing the whole of Europe in theory he substituted the territorial province.

In 1522 he had held that it was not lawful for the individual to rebel against the *Endchrist*, that is, the papacy, and to make use of force. On the other hand, the secular authorities and the nobles "ought from a sense of duty to employ their regular authority for this purpose, each prince and ruler in his own land." This opinion was flatly contradicted by his work *On the Secular Power*, which plainly taught that the prince had no concern of any kind in the religion of a country.

When princes came over to him he exhorted them to terminate insults and blasphemies against God, even if the ordinary life of the State sustained grievous injury thereby. The sovereign and the congregation at Wittenberg heard that the Mass was a perpetual blasphemy against God.¹ As this scandal was public, the faithful could not tolerate it. It is the bounden duty of the State "to punish blasphemers . . . and in the same way they should punish, or at least not brook, those who teach that Christ did not die for our sins."² If the representatives of opposing beliefs will not agree, "then let the authorities step in and try each case, and, whichever party does not agree with the Scripture, let it be ordered to hold its peace."³ That is, the State was constituted the judge

¹ On the Mass in Saxony, cf. R. Müller, *Die Wittenberg. Bewegung 1521 und 1522*: *Archiv. für Reformationsgeschichte*, VI, 195 ff., 319. On Wittenberg cf. F. v. Bezold, *Geschichte der deutschen Reformation*, 563; Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 524-8, 780 ff.; 2, 464; Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, I, 550; Kolde, 72; N. Paulus, *War Luther im Prinzip tolerant?* (in *Wissenschaftl. Beilage zur Germania*, 1910, Nos. 12-3).

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 250 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, 39, p. 252. Cf. A. L. Richter, *Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, I, pp. 77-82.

of doctrine. In *A Circular Letter to the Princes of Saxony*, 1524, he had permitted freedom of discussion. A year later he allowed the authorities no right to prevent every man "from teaching and believing whatever he wished, whether it be gospel or lie." As with Erasmus, the only limit imposed was to be sedition or a disturbance of the public peace. The warm partisan of that inconsistent thinker, the Elector John Frederick of Saxony, the successor of the Elector John, adopted the opinion that the State must insist on uniformity of doctrine.¹ He would, he announced, "recognize no sects or divisions in his lands or principalities" in order "to prevent harmful revolt and other unrighteousness." Inconsistently he added that it was not his intention to "prescribe to any one what he should hold or believe."

Melanchthon drew up the Code of Instructions for the Inspectors of Parsonages, softening the uncompromising attitude of Luther to justification by faith and the slavery of the human will. Festivals and holy days were not all to be abolished: he retained, for instance, the festivals of our Lord, the feasts of the Annunciation, the Purification, and the Visitation of the Virgin Mary, and those of Mary Magdalene, St. Michael, St. John the Baptist, and of the Twelve Apostles. Melanchthon enjoined that it was right for the people to partake of both elements in the Lord's Supper: nevertheless, "the weaker brethren who from conscientious scruples (not from stiff-neckedness) could not bring themselves to receive the Communion in both kinds were to be allowed for a space of time to continue receiving only one element." As he feared the spread of licence, he asked the preachers to correct erroneous ideas on the subject of Christian liberty. It did not mean freedom from State control and from taxation: it did mean freedom from the bondage of rites and ceremonies and from the law of Moses, deliverance from the Devil, and no unconditional obedience to church organization. He plainly insisted that his disciples must render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's in no unconditional fashion, even though the rule of Cæsar was exceedingly stern. "We must submit," concluded Melanchthon, "to all secular laws and ordinances as to the will and laws of God; for Solomon lays down, 'Wisdom on the lips of kings,' that is, whatever is ordered and decreed by rulers must be carried out as though it were the commandment of God. Whosoever boasts of the name of Christ must bear all hardships willingly, must give where he owes nothing, and pay though

¹ Burkhardt, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kirchen- und Schulvisitationen*, pp. 120-1.

he be taxed unjustly.”¹ The Elector John Frederick was so satisfied with these instructions that he submitted them to Luther, who expressed his hearty agreement with them.

The Elector Frederick the Wise so disliked taking strong measures that he frequently impressed on the Wittenberg leaders the need of caution. Matters assumed another aspect when in 1525 there came a change of ruler. The Elector John of Saxony was a zealous friend of the reformer, and soon became the real patron of Lutheranism. His attitude towards the innovations, combined with Luther's tendencies, constituted a prime factor in the rise of a State-governed Church.

Another factor was the deplorable condition of the Lutheran congregations which had so far sprung up. They were scattered and devoid of organization. A further circumstance which contributed to bring about the State supremacy of a later date, was the corruption of not a few of the newly formed congregations, which urgently called for a strong hand and adequate means of coercion. The intervention of the prince in the 1525 insurrection also enhanced the influence of the ruler as a bulwark against a similar danger, ecclesiastically or otherwise.²

The Visitation of the Saxon Churches in 1525 constitutes a landmark in the growth of territorial power. Spalatin wished this very year that the sovereign would put the Christian bit into the mouth of all the clergy, so that they could only preach Lutheran doctrine: his wish was speedily fulfilled. The direct dependence of the sacerdotium on the imperium was as definitely marked in Saxony as it was in the East.³

The Elector hears that “as the supreme head”—thus anticipating the view of Henry VIII by six years—he was to appoint four visitors who by his “orders should arrange for the erection and support of the schools and parsonages where

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 26, pp. 29–96.

² On Luther's attitude to the State cf. F. v. Bezold, *Kultur der Gegenwart*, 2, 5, 66, 85; K. Holl, *Luther u. das landesherrliche Kirchenregiment*, 1 ff., 19–22, 54; K. Müller, *Kirche, Gemeinde u. Obrigkeit nach Luther*, 54, 61, 67, 74 ff., 79, 81 ff.; P. Drews, 74, 81, 90, 95 ff., 98–9, 100–104, 301; P. Wernle, *Die Renaissance des Christentums im 16. Jahrhundert*, 36; K. Sell, *Der Zusammenhang von Reformation u. politischer Freiheit*, 44–79; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, 1², 274; 2², 321; W. Friedensburg, *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgesch.*, No. 100, p. 90; G. Krüger, *Philipp Melanchthon*, 14 ff.; Ellinger, *Philipp Melanchthon*, 588; G. Rietschel, *Lehrb. der Liturgik*, 278; Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 10; F. G. Ward, *Darstellung u. Würdigung*, 21; E. Brandenburg, *Luthers Anschauung vom Staate*, 13 ff.; N. Paulus, *Protestantismus u. Toleranz*, 7 ff., 14; Böhmer, 135, 164, 166; Kolde, *Friedrich der Weise*, 38, 69 ff.

³ Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, 1, p. 186.

this was wanted." Two were to attend to material needs, and the Elector was reminded that all the monasteries and foundations had now fallen to his charge. The secularization of Church property had indeed begun.¹ As "one appointed by God for the matter and empowered to act," the Elector appointed the other two, who were to have a theological training for their duties of examining into the doctrine, preaching, and performance of spiritual duties.² In 1728, more than 200 years later, Rousseau enjoined upon the sovereign prince the duty of arranging the worship and fixing the amount of dogma to be received by his subjects. The Church with Louis XIV and with Napoleon was a department of State, just as it was in Russia down to the Revolution of March 1917. On these principles the relations between Church and State in Saxony were founded.³ They conceded to the sovereign the right not only of drawing up rules for the revenues of the ecclesiastical body, but also the right of drawing up rules for the constitution and for the doctrine thereof. The Elector's attitude to doctrine is that as sovereign he is not free to tolerate what he considers to be false worship or false dogma in his territories. Luther accepts this position without a grumble. In the preface to the *Unterricht der Visitatorn an die Pharkern*, he believes that "now by the unspeakable grace of God the gospel has been brought back to us once more, or rather has dawned on us for the first time."⁴ "Here comes the Visitor," comments Cochläus, "wearing a new kind of mitre, setting up a new form of the papacy, prescribing new laws for divine worship and reviving what had long since fallen into disuse and dragging it forth into the light once more."⁵ Cochläus felt, what Milton felt, that new presbyter was but old priest writ large.

According to the Visitorial Instruction it is the duty of the sovereign to abolish public scandals, and hence to remove unworthy priests. He nominated pastors and provided for their

¹ Cf. Luther's complaints in *Briefe*, 2, pp. 569, 572; 3, pp. 136, 142 (De Wette). Cf. Melanchthon's complaints in *Corp. Reform.*, 4, pp. 695, 882; 5, p. 770.

² Nov. 22, 1526, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 386; *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 406.

³ Böhmer (1906 ed.), 127; Weiss-Denifle, 2, 251 ff.; Drews, *Entsprach das Staatskirchentum dem Ideale Luthers?* 34; H. Hermelink, *Zu Luther's Gedanken über Idealgemeinden und von weltlicher Obrigkeit*, in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* (29, 1908), 267 ff.; Maurenbrecher, *Studien u. Skizzen*, 344 ff.; R. Seeberg, *Lehrb. der Dogmengesch.*, pt. 2, 289 ff.; Köstlin-Kawerau, 1, 250, 255 ff.; 2, 47 ff., 273, 552; Köstlin, *Luther's Theologie*, 21, 552, 554, 563; 23, 257, 278, 262, 269; Ellinger, *Philipp Melanchthon*, chap. v, 219 ff.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 26, p. 197; Erl. ed., 23, p. 5.

⁵ In the Preface to the Reader: "Visitator nova mitra infulatur, novum ambiens papatum."

support. He alone controlled the consistory, and as the divinely appointed authority he must abolish the remnants of Popish error. Those ministers who persisted in the error of their ways were to be removed and all the preachers "who advocate, preach, or hold any erroneous doctrines, are to be told to quit our lands in haste, and also that should they return they will be severely dealt with." Whoever refuses to abide by the regulations of the sovereign in the dispensing of the sacraments is to leave the electorate. For "though it is not our intention to prescribe to any one what he is to hold or believe, yet we will not tolerate any sect or division in our principality in order to prevent harmful revolt and other mischief." Any lay man who refused to abjure his error when requested to do so was obliged within a certain time to sell out and leave the country "with a warning of being severely dealt with." To those thus expelled from their native land Luther writes, "Be careful to keep, as Paul teaches, the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and charity."¹ "O liberty, what crimes have been committed in thy name," exclaimed Madame Roland. "O unity of the Church, what crimes have been committed in thy name," an expelled Saxon might well exclaim.

Luther stoutly defended the uniformity of worship and doctrine in all the countries over which he had control. Princes, like John of Saxony and Philip of Hesse, warmly endorsed the opinion he expressed in 1526 that where there was no such uniformity there would always be sects and revolts. It followed as a corollary from this that dissenting preachers must be removed. Actuated by this motive the inhabitants of Nürnberg, for instance, had "silenced the monks and shut up their monasteries."² Supported by the town council, Luther requested his sovereign to banish those who remained true to their old convictions; for such people must be swept away like "chaff from its threshing-floor."³ Violent conversions are excused on the ground that "what is done by the regular authorities is not to be regarded as revolt."⁴

In 1527 the Elector ordered a visitation of the churches of the Saxon Electorate.⁵ The ecclesiastical visitors were par-

¹ Eph. iv. 3.

² To the Elector John, Feb. 9, 1526, *Werke*, Erl. ed., p. 368; *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 318.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 26, p. 200; Erl. ed., 23, p. 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 679; Erl. ed., 22, p. 48.

⁵ Luther's letter to Levin Metzsch, Aug. 26, 1529, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 54, p. 97; *Briefwechsel*, 7, p. 149. To Thos. Löscher, Aug. 26, 1529, *Briefwechsel*, 7, p. 150. To the Margrave George of Brandenburg, Sept. 14, 1531, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 54, p. 253; *Briefwechsel*, 9, p. 103.

ticularly to bring to light any sect or schism their zeal could discover. Any "suspected of error concerning the sacraments or some doctrine of faith" were to be summoned and examined and, if necessary, hostile witnesses were to be heard. If they refused to abjure their error, they were commanded to sell their possessions within a given time and leave their land. Formally the people were not yet obliged by the ruler to attend Lutheran services, though that stage at length arrived in both the Electorate and Duchy of Saxony. The regulations of 1527 implied that all who did not attend such services were suspect.

Originally Luther had been content to allow each congregation to appoint a minister who might belong to it or come from outside: he then acted in their name and with their authority. The jurisdiction belonged to the congregation as a whole: this is clear in Luther's *Deutsche Messe*.¹ He adhered to his convictions in the priesthood of all believers, and hence the absolution from sin belonged to them all.

In the preface to the *Unterricht*, 1525, Luther makes some reservations which indicate that he is not quite happy in holding his opinion that the Elector has supreme control over Church as well as State. He protests that he cannot allow the directions in the *Unterricht* to be issued as a direct law, "lest we set up a new Papal decretal." In order to remove the contradiction between his early views and those now entertained, he confessed that the prince agreed to the visitation at Luther's own request "out of Christian charity and for God's sake, though this was not indeed required of him as a secular ruler." He admits that "although His Electoral Highness is not commanded to teach and exercise a spiritual rule, yet it is his duty as the secular authority to insist that no dissension, factions, and revolts, take place among his subjects." For this reason did not the Emperor Constantine exhort Christians to unity in faith and doctrine? In addition to the four Visitors his *Unterricht* introduced "Superintendents." They were to enforce the unity of the spirit for which the reformer professed such anxiety. In the directions to them coercion is staunchly defended. Whoever teaches or preaches against the Word of God what "is conducive to revolt against the authorities" is to be "prohibited" by the superintendent. If this procedure fails, the Elector is to take further steps. The Saxon Elector is a "Christian member": he is a "Christian brother" in the Church of which he is "our emergency bishop," as Luther

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 19, p. 75; Erl. ed., 22, p. 230.

terms him. The state of financial confusion is the chief reason that "his Electoral Highness, the embodiment of secular authority, should look into and settle things." In this weak fashion Luther tries to conceal the altered position of his body from the ideal of the faithful gathered into a series of congregations outside the power of the State. The stars in their courses were fighting against him. Like Zwingli, he is compelled to allow the intervention of the prince if the anarchy of individuals is not to destroy the body he is striving to create. Unwillingly he faced the fact that his religious revolution led him to a political church.¹ His aim was to allot to the prince not the duty of judging the Word of God, but that of defending it. Like Calvin, he does not intend that religion should depend on the State, and he wants to place the State at the service of religion.²

In 1526 Luther expressed his opinion on tyrannicide. In his *Table-talk* he raises the question, "Whether it be lawful to kill a tyrant, who, at his pleasure, acts contrary to right and justice?"³ His answer, like Melanchthon's, is in the affirmative, when he really oppresses his subjects by outrageous deeds of wrong; then the "citizens and subjects unite together" to destroy him just as they would any other murderer or highwayman.⁴ Luther in the course of the argument appeals to nature and law. In his *Ob Kriegsleutte auch ynn seligen Stande seyn künden*,⁵ 1526, he will not hear of the mob taking violent action "whereby the people rise and depose their lord or strangle him." For "it does not do to pipe too much to the mob, or it will readily lose its head."

As one turns over the Visitorial Instructions, it is not easy to believe that Luther had begun by insisting that the new gospel was to be set forth in a spirit of tolerance, a position taken up by Rupert of Deutz in the twelfth century and by Marsilius of Padua in the fourteenth. In 1518 and 1520 the

¹ On the limits of the functions of the State cf. Farel, *Sommaire*, p. 98.

² For Sohm's view of Luther's Church cf. his *Kirchenrecht*, 528, 561, 579, 613, 615, 618, 623, 630, 633 ff.; cf. also K. Müller, *Kirche, Gemeinde und Obrigkeit nach Luther*, 40 ff., 84; Drews, *Entsprach das Staatskirchentum dem Ideale Luthers?* 36, 38, 65, 68, 43; Ecke, *Schwenckfeld, Luther u. der Gedanke einer apostolischen Reformation*, 24, 39, 43, 101; K. Müller, *Luther u. Karlstadt*, 121; A. L. Richter, *Die evang. Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrh.*, 1, 56; F. Feuchtwanger, *Gesch. der sozialen Politik . . . im Zeitalter der Reformation*, 193.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, pp. 201-2, 207.

⁴ On Melanchthon's position cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 13, p. 1128; 2, c.c. 20-2; x, c.c. 699 ff. In 1537 he changed his mind and maintained the justice of tyrannicide. Cf. *ibid.*, III, c. 631.

⁵ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 19, p. 635; Erl. ed., 22, p. 259.

reformer declared that "to burn heretics is against the will of the Holy Ghost."¹ In the latter year he maintained that "heretics must be overcome by argument, not by fire."² Two of the three great pamphlets of the year 1520 emphasize the fact that authority possesses no power to compel assent to a body of doctrine. The first of these, the *Babylonian Captivity*, asserts that "neither Pope, nor bishop, nor any man has a right to impose even a syllable on the Christian without his own consent."³ "No laws can be imposed upon Christians by any authority whatsoever, neither by men, nor by angels, except with their own consent, for we are free of all things."⁴ Such imposition takes away one of the most precious privileges of men, though few Christians realize the joy of Christian liberty.⁵ The second of these pamphlets, the *Freedom of a Christian Man*, approaches the problem from another point of view. The priesthood of the believer gives him by this very fact power over all such matters. How can any one therefore presume to order him when, by obeying the commandments, he is spiritually lord of all?⁶

Once Luther has grasped principles he is not slow to apply them to details. If a man does not care to attend Mass, must he come? In 1520 he answers the question in his *Erklerung . . . eilicher Artickel*. His argument was that as Christ, the founder of the Church, had not made attendance at this sacrament compulsory, reception of the elements was not formally laid down, though "it would be a good thing to receive under both kinds."⁷ While alone in the Wartburg he composed his *Von der Beicht ob der Bapst Macht habe zu gepieten*, 1521, and made his famous statement, "He (i.e. any man) is at liberty to make use of Confession if, as, and where he chooses. If he does not wish you may not compel him, for no one has a right or ought to force any man against his will. Notwithstanding, absolution is a great gift of God."⁸ It is obvious from the whole context that he did not lightly esteem the *Te absolvo* of the priest. When, however, even it

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 1, p. 624; *Opp. lat. var.*, 2, p. 288. On the 1518 Resolutions cf. *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, pp. 139-49; Erl. ed., 24², p. 139; cf. also prop. 33 condemned by Leo X in the Bull "Exsurge Domine."

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 7, p. 139; *Opp. lat. var.*, 5, p. 221.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 536; *Opp. lat. var.*, 5, p. 68.

⁴ *De captiv. babyl.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 537; *Opp. lat. var.*, 5, p. 70.

⁵ *De captiv. babyl.*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 536; *Opp. lat. var.*, 5, pp. 68, 70.

⁶ *Von der Freyheyt eynes Christen Menschen*, Weim. ed., 7, pp. 23, 27 ff.; *Opp. lat. var.*, pp. 179, 185 ff.

⁷ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 79; Erl. ed., 27, p. 72.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 157; Erl. ed., 27, p. 343.

came into conflict with his principle, it must yield. In this booklet he powerfully urges the liberty of a Christian man, who ought to be unfettered either by law or custom. Though he always believed baptism to be essential to salvation, nevertheless if any one does not wish to be baptized, let him alone. The *Larger Catechism* of 1529 points out that "Here (i.e. in the Bible) we have God's command and institution": therefore it is "seriously and strictly commanded that we be baptized on pain of not being saved."¹ On September 17, 1521, he wrote to Haupold and others, "I will have no forcing and compelling. Faith and baptism I commend: no one, however, may be forced to adopt it, but only admonished and then left free to choose."² *Von der Beicht ob der Bapst Macht habe zu gepieten* is a sustained plea on the importance of men paying attention not to the desires of popes and councils on confession and baptism, but to the commands of God. His prejudices against the Pope and the Sacred College were at work and they blinded his eyes to the attractions of toleration, and in 1520 he informed Prierias that he coupled them with thieves and murderers.³ Still in 1521 he thought that "no one must be forced into the faith, but the Gospel must be set before every one and all be admonished to believe, yet left free to obey or not. All the Sacraments must be free to every one."⁴ There were lapses from this policy in 1522 and 1523 at Eilenburg, Altenburg, Wittenberg, and Schwarzburg. Still in his book *On the Secular Power*, which appeared in March 1523, he advocates a *laissez-faire* policy on the part of the prince. In it he adopts the Austinian view that the State possessed no coercive jurisdiction. The Christianity of the State was to him a doubtful proposition. Indeed the body politic exists for the sake of the wicked: the fall of man is its fundamental cause. That is, this body resembles W. von Humboldt's *Ideen*, of which the essence is the denial that the State enjoys the right to be anything more than chief policeman: it is, in Huxley's phrase, anarchy plus the policeman. It is removed by a world from the Hobbeian conception of the State: "non est super terram potestas quæ comparetur ei."

On the whole Luther retains his belief in the conquering might of truth. Freedom of worship is as much the reformer's ideal as freedom of teaching. In 1523 he allows the State no

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 21, p. 129.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 16², p. 275; 53, p. 77; *Briefwechsel*, 3, p. 236.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 347; *Opp. lat. var.*, 2, p. 107. Cf. Paulus, *Protestantismus und Toleranz im 16. Jahrhundert*, p. 17.

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 8, p. 157; Erl. ed., 27, p. 343.

right of interference. He concedes that the resistance of heretics is part of the duty of bishops by virtue of their office, but princes ought not to meddle in such matters, "for heresy can never be overcome by a strong hand."¹ The extremes of Anabaptism did not at first shake him in his belief in toleration. Thomas Münzer and the fanatics bitterly attacked him, and it was a sore temptation to appeal to the assistance of the Elector Frederick and Duke John of Saxony. Still, great is truth and it will prevail over all forms of error. In spite of the violent statements of Münzer, "all should preach resolutely and freely as they were able and with whomsoever they please. . . . Let the spirits fall upon one another and fight it out. Should some be led astray, so much the worse."²

From the year 1525 there is a marked change in the attitude of Luther to toleration. Before then there had been instances of persecution due to him in Eilenburg and other towns. For the future, however, the tendency to freedom of conscience and to the independence of the Church is to be replaced by religious coercion and the interference of the State. No doubt the excesses of the Anabaptists were in part responsible for the change. Still he urged the Saxon princes to leave these men in peace. "Let them preach as they please"—such was his advice—"for there must needs be heresies."³ He was careful to explain to Lazarus Spengler of Nürnberg, on February 4, 1525, that the Anabaptists were not to be coerced because they were not real blasphemers: they were only "like the Turks or straying Christians."⁴ Two months later, he pleads that "the authorities are not to hinder any one from teaching and believing in what he pleases."⁵ In 1525 he informed Carlstadt that each one was free to follow his own conscience, and to receive the sacrament or not just as he pleases. "Doctrinal command and compulsion are not to be tolerated."⁶ In April 1525, in the very heart of the Peasants' War, he still proclaims that "the authorities must not oppose what each one chooses to believe and teach, whether it be the truth or a lie." He insinuates, however, that "it is enough that they hinder the preaching of feud and lawlessness."⁷ In keeping with this he urges in 1525 that though "our princes do not

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 287; Erl. ed., 22, p. 90.

² *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 265; *Briefwechsel*, 4, p. 372.

³ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 15, p. 218; Erl. ed., 53, p. 255. The text is 1 Cor. xi. 9.

⁴ *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 117.

⁵ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 299; Erl. ed., 24², p. 276.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 112; Erl. ed., 29, p. 190.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 298; Erl. ed., 24², p. 176.

force the people to faith and to the Gospel," yet they "place a limit on outward abominations."¹ In a letter to Spalatin he develops the exception.

The Court chaplain, Spalatin, had unfortunately little belief in persuasion and much in compulsion. In a letter of May 1, 1525, he urges the example of the Mosaic law.² This law in his judgment obliged the State to bring to an end blasphemy and idolatry, and "to put the Christian bit in the mouth of all the clergy. . . . Ah! that indeed would be a noble work."³ The lengths to which the fanatical Protestants were proceeding greatly disturbed the mind of Luther, and he turned over in his mind the advisability of the use of this Christian bit. He felt that had not Carlstadt appeared "with the extreme men, all would have gone well with my undertaking. But though I alone lifted it out of the gutter, they covet the prize and poach on my preserves, yet, owing to the way they set about the matter, they were, in spite of their anxiety to destroy the Pope, really working for him."⁴ His intense prejudice against all wearers of the papal tiara, whether they were as worldly as Leo X or as religious as Adrian VI, overcame his judgment, and he allowed his feelings to carry him to intolerance. There was always the horror of the head of Romanism, and combined with it was the growing dislike of the Anabaptists who, all unconscious of it, were thwarting the progress of the Evangel and were furthering the cause of Leo X.

The change in Luther's mind is apparent in his letter to the Elector John on February 9, 1526, in which he expresses his view that "a secular ruler must not allow his officials to be led into strife and tumult by contumacious preachers, for this may result in rebellion and sedition, but in each locality there must be only one kind of preacher."⁵ It was a clever appeal to make to the prince, who was naturally impressed by the argument that his power was in danger. In February 1531, the Elector John therefore declared his satisfaction with this memorandum, and that he would "for the future conduct himself in such matters as befitted a Christian."⁶ The after-history of Saxony proves how well he so conducted himself. Carlstadt and Münzer had assisted in driving Luther towards the policy of State interference.

¹ Letter to Spalatin, Nov. 11, 1525; *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 271.

² He refers to Deut. vii.

³ Printed in Kolde, *Friedrich der Weise*, p. 68 ff.

⁴ Lauterbach, *Tagebuch*, p. 37.

⁵ *Werke*, Erl. ed., p. 367; *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 318.

⁶ Enders, *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 320; Burkhardt, *Luther's Briefwechsel*, p. 102

Slowly Luther returned, though in a new national form, to what had been the practice of Europe. In 1525 he clearly believes that the prince cannot force faith, but may he not repress abominable excesses? These excesses have frightened him. In consequence he reverts to the established custom. In 1526 he proclaimed that "in a country there must be one preaching only allowed."¹ Nor is he singular in this point of view: it is that of Zwingli in Switzerland and of Lambert in France. Zwingli, in his work *De vera et falsa religione*, lays it down quite plainly.² Lambert in his *Farrago* maintains that "kings, princes, magistrates must drive the heretics from their lands."³ He is certain that the law of Moses orders the death of those who persist in turning the faithful from the Word of God. Thinkers like him protest against the burning of men in France and the Low Countries; nevertheless they hold it to be their duty to act similarly in Germany and Switzerland.

In spite of hesitations, Luther presses on. In 1525 Catholicism is rooted out in Saxony. The goods of the Church and the monasteries are secularized, the priests banished, the old worship proscribed. In 1525 in Prussia, in 1526 in Hesse, and in 1527 in Liegnitz, *Cujus regio, ejus religio* is the order of the day. The towns suffer the same fate. The Mass is suppressed in 1525 at Zürich, in 1526 at Strassburg, in 1528 at Berne, in 1528 at Saint-Gall and Bâle, one of the homes of Erasmus, and in 1530 at Neuchâtel. The pamphlets of Luther everywhere prepared the way for this policy: they are the precursors of the Press. His policy also prepared the way for the day of the territorial prince. According to Henri Martin, Cardinal Richelieu "gave birth at once to the two great enemies, whose contest was to fill the modern world, absolutism and the Press." Luther has a prior claim to their parentage.

The Church will suppress heresy, the State the heretics. The one, in the name of truth, will bind consciences: the other, in the name of unity, will bind bodies. Such a tie between Church and State had been very close since the fourteenth century, but then there had been only one Church and one State in Europe. All dissent from the common faith was relentlessly crushed by force. This tie Luther had snapped for ever. What was the new bond to be? The old unitary

¹ Luther's letter to Spalatin, Nov. 11, 1525; Luther's letter to John of Saxony, Feb. 9, 1526; Enders, V, Nos. 1002, 1034.

² *Opp.*, III, p. 1, "De Magistratu."

³ The *Farrago rerum theologicarum* was written in 1525. Cf. chap. vi: "De coercendis et propellendis pseudo-episcopis," art. 140, 145, 147, 151 and 155; also chap. ix, art. 216.

conception could not easily be dislodged. "If a man consider the original of this great ecclesiastical dominion," thought Hobbes, "he will easily perceive that the papacy is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof." As the Roman Church occupied the place of the Roman Empire, so the Lutheran Church occupied the place of the Roman Church. The unitary principle had been the determining one in Europe: it was henceforth to be the determining one in a nation. In the interests of unity there had been rigorous laws against heresy in the past, and in the interests of unity there were to be equally rigorous laws against heresy in the future. *The Freedom of a Christian Man* was a pamphlet addressed to the people. Five years after its publication the Peasants' War had devastated one of the fairest lands of Germany. Once Luther had spoken manfully of the rights of conscience. The Saxon Visitation Articles, however, plainly prove that force is for the future to be an element in the propaganda of the Lutheran message. In 1527 the Visitors exercise jurisdiction over laymen, have power to examine any suspect of sacramental or other errors pertaining to the faith: witnesses are to be called.¹ If the suspect refuses to abjure his errors, he is given a certain time to sell his lands and possessions and is banished. Practically the Visitation was the means by which the ruler was enabled to get rid of the remaining Roman Catholics. In its methods it reminds us of the Inquisition.

In 1528, for a short time, Luther returned to his old attitude to toleration. His motive for approving of it used to be love of truth, whereas now it is a pragmatic one. Severity to the heretic was perhaps advisable, but what if this practical argument were employed against Luther's own followers? How much this weighed with him is clear from his letter of July 14, 1528, to Wenceslaus Link of Nürnberg.² He was averse therefore to the imposition of the death penalty on the Anabaptists. Was there, however, not a way out of the difficulty? Their bodies ought not to be molested, but ought not their writings to be proscribed? This is often the first step on the road leading to intolerance: so it proved to the once tolerant reformer. The Elector John on January 17, 1528, proscribed the books and pamphlets of the Anabaptists, Sacramentarians and

¹ Cf. the text in Sehling, *Die evang. Kirchenordnung. des 16. Jahrh.*, Abt. I, p. 142 ff.

² *Briefwechsel*, 6, p. 299: "In hac causa terret me exempli sequela, quam in papistis et ante Christum in Judæis videmus. . . . Idem sequitur esse timeo et apud nostros."

fanatics throughout the land. He travelled another step when, in accordance with the letter of the Saxon Visitation, he decreed the banishment of the Anabaptists. The Visitation Rules of 1528 are in accordance with this spirit. They declare that "all secular authority" is to be obeyed because the secular powers are not ordering "new worship, but enforcing peace and charity."¹

Luther did not like the route he was taking. At Strassburg, the home of Wenceslaus Link, a follower, Peter Butz, was Town Clerk. In spite of his official position, he boldly protested against the coercive measures favoured by some of the Strassburg ministers. Luther himself expounded the Parable of the Good Seed and the Tares, and all friends of persecution avoided this parable, which was so fatal to their cause. For the point of it is that both the seed and the tares are to grow together till the Lord of the Harvest appear. Luther could not help himself if he advocated toleration when he chose such a text: it was always a favourite one with the supporters of freedom of opinion. His conclusion was that "we are not to fight the fanatics with the sword."²

A point of view is often as much due to a repelling force as to an attracting one. Carlstadt, for example, repelled Luther by his tendency to develop the new theology in showing its logical outcome. Instead of bringing Luther with him, Carlstadt sent him into the arms of Philip Melancthon, whose theology was essentially that of a humanist. That is, the very extremity of the position Carlstadt occupied made Luther's theology more moderate than it otherwise would have become. On the other hand, the intemperance of Carlstadt's adherents forced the reformer to assume the attitude that they must be coerced. Therefore while Carlstadt drove Luther's theology in one direction, practically he drove him in the opposite direction.

Luther was still at work on the Old Testament. In 1524 and 1525 he annotated the Books of Deuteronomy and of the Prophet Isaiah, in 1526 the Books of the Prophets Jonah, Habakkuk, Zechariah and Jeremiah, Ecclesiastes, and some of the Psalms, especially the 112th. In 1527 he again translated and commented on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah and preached sermons on the Books of Leviticus and Numbers. In 1528 he returned to his exegesis of the prophet Zechariah. In 1529 he preached sermons on the Book of Deuteronomy. In 1530

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 26, p. 223 ff.; Erl. ed., 23, p. 45 ff.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 4^a, p. 290 ff.

he translated the Books of the Prophets Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets. These writings show how much the Old Testament was in his thoughts.¹ The enactments in it against blasphemers and idolaters were matters on which he was steadily engaged. Might it not be possible that, in spite of his former writings, for example, *On the Secular Power*, the Elector of Saxony was the present-day representative of the Kings of Judah and Israel? From possibility to probability is but a short stage, especially when his young Church was reaping benefits from the inquisitorial methods of the Saxons. Had not his favourite Father, St. Austin, become intolerant under the pressure of circumstances? If we may compare small matters with large, just as the sects of Protestantism were saved from splitting up into ever-multiplying numbers by the polity of John Calvin, so the Lutherans might be saved by disciplinary measures.

Wenceslaus Link² and Georg Spalatin believed that the Kings of Judah and Israel were patterns for imitation in their day.³ In 1530 Luther is beginning to teach that Roman Catholics were open blasphemers. The sacrifice of the Mass rendered the Atonement of none effect. When Christ died, He died once for all.⁴ Participation in the Mass and the value attached to the performance of good works robbed the death of Christ of all meaning. If he felt sternly to those he regarded in this light, he began to feel no less sternly to the foes of his own household, the Anabaptists. In 1530 a mandate had been issued against them, and six were executed early in the year at Reinhardsbrunn in the duchy of Saxe-Gotha: the new faith owned its bead-roll of martyrs.

Whatever lingering doubts the leader had on the question of toleration—the inexpediency of toleration—his own circle allayed them. He had given up the principle in favour of the question of practice, and the moment he made this momentous change he was intolerant: the cause was at work from 1525, though the occasion did not present itself till the early days of 1530. In the February of that year Melanchthon was of opinion that “even the Anabaptists do not advocate anything

¹ On his translations and editions cf. his *Briefe* (De Wette), 3, 106, 109, 110, 114, 116, 126, 130, 148, 154, 161, 172, 222, 225, 247 f., 255, 326, 341, 389, 414, 447 f., 500 f., 553, 539, 555; 6, 77, 110 f.; *Op. exegetica*, 1 ff., 21–3, 267 ff.; Mathesius vii.; *Corp. Reform.*, 1, 788, 793, 795, 983, 1074 ff., 1083; Seidemann, *Ref.*, 1, 204; Baumgarten, II, 2, 631; Burkhardt in *Luthardts Zeitschr.* (1883), 8 ff.

² *Mitteilungen der Geschichtsforsch. Gesellschaft des Osterlandes*, 6, p. 119 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 513 ff.; cf. Enders, *Luther's Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 318, n. 1.

⁴ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 250 ff.

sedition or openly blasphemous," nevertheless it was "in his judgment the duty of the authorities to put them to death."¹ In the spring of 1530 Luther, in his *Commentary on Psalm lxxxii*, says that "the faith is not to be imposed on any one, for he is free to believe what he pleases. He is not free to break out into teaching and blasphemy by which he seeks to rob God and Christians of their doctrine and Bible, enjoying all the time their (i.e. princes') protection and all temporal advantages. Let him go where there are no Christians and do as he likes there."² He is inclined in this commentary to mingle the two motives of disbelief and sedition: unity in belief, in his opinion, leads to unity in the State. He proceeds to analyse the difference between the two kinds of heretics, the opposers of the faith and the opposers of the State. The body politic obviously has a right to punish the latter, but can it or ought it to punish the former? Yes, they too must be punished, for by intruding as preachers they imperil the faith, thereby provoking risings. The oath of the burghers constrains them not to listen to such preachers and to report these men either to their minister or to the authorities. As he mixes motives, so he mixes the two sets of rulers. If they will not cease their disturbances "then let the authorities hand over the knaves of that order to their proper master, that is, Master Hans (i.e. the hangman)."³ He still entertains some doubts—doubts which were gradually vanishing—when a man was simply a preacher. He entertains no manner of doubt when he taught revolt: Master Hans was clearly entitled to him.

When a man has not decidedly arrived at a decision, the application to him for advice brings the matter to a head. Wenceslaus Link, Georg Spalatin and Philip Melanchthon had been assisting in the process of the gestation of Luther's thought. On March 17, 1530, Lazarus Spengler of Nürnberg sought through his acquaintance with Veit Dietrich an answer to the question of the practicability of toleration. Luther spoke to Dietrich, who at once wrote to Spengler.⁴ The outcome was that of course all offenders against public order were to be punished: so were the Sacramentarians or Zwinglians and the Papists, for they injured religion, and thereby morality. Spengler himself was perfectly well aware that in his own town there were warm friends to toleration. He knew earnest Christians who were

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 17 ff.

² *Commentary on Ps. lxxxii*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 251 ff.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, pp. 250, 252, 254; 43, p. 313. Cf. Weim. ed., 32, p. 507.

⁴ U. Haussdorf, *Leben Spenglers*, Nürnberg, 1741, p. 190 ff.

most unwilling to persecute either the Sacramentarians or the Anabaptists, provided they did not set revolt in motion. These Christians appealed in support of their position to the letter of Luther himself written in July 1524 to the Saxon princes, "in which he approves of this view and admits it to be quite sound."¹ It is a noble speech: still, Luther had virtually thrown away the principle of authority, and expediency is not a matter for which he could make a stand.

He is no longer afraid of the consequences of his persecuting policy, though this fear weighed with him two years before. Others cannot claim for their conscience what he can claim for his. The reason is plain. He takes his stand on the Bible, which he can interpret without any possibility of mistake. He and he alone holds a key which can open the meaning to any passage. That is, he is the possessor, the complete and infallible possessor of truth. "I beseech you in the bowels of Christ," Oliver Cromwell wrote to the Scots clergy in 1650, "think it possible that you may be mistaken."² Therein the Protector was wrong. No leader in the circumstances of either Luther or the Scots clergy can afford to think that he can in any wise be mistaken. Cecil Rhodes asked Lord Acton, "Why does not Mr. Theodore Bent say that the Zimbabwe ruins are Phœnician?" Lord Acton answered, "Because he is not quite sure they are." "Ah," replied the proconsul, "that is not the way that Empires are founded."³

If Luther permits persecution, may not Roman Catholic rulers persecute Lutheran precisely for the reasons for which Lutheran rulers persecute their subjects? Not at all. If they pursue this plan, they merely imitate the policy of those Kings of Israel who protect the true peoples. Such princes are false prophets themselves. Their Emperor, Charles himself, lacks certainty in his faith.⁴ He is not convinced, he cannot be convinced that "the doctrine of the Papists is true, and that he must therefore, in compliance with God's command, exercise all his power to extirpate our heretical doctrines in his Empire. . . . We know he is not certain of this, and, in fact, cannot be certain."⁵

The Electoral Court approached Melanchthon at the end of 1530, and he drafted a statement on the duty of the State

¹ M. Meyer, *Spengleriana*, 1830, p. 70 ff. Cf. Paulus, p. 33.

² Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, I, 275.

³ Grant Duff, *Notes from a Diary*, 1896-1901, I, 185.

⁴ *Commentary on Ps. lxxxiv*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 257 ff.

⁵ Memorandum of 1530, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 54, p. 179 ff.; *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 105.

in these questions. The authority which stirred him was one which felt the seditious character of the Anabaptists and other sects. This was a motive which weighed with him and Luther, and with both men the religious motive was also one which counted. Melancthon unmistakably advocated a regular system of force. The extremists should suffer the penalty of death for offences against good government, civil and ecclesiastical, and it is the duty of the State to preserve order. How can any systems of Church government be sustained if they are allowed to teach that men can become holy without either preaching or common worship? They insist that "our baptism and preaching is not Christian, and therefore that ours is not the Church of Christ."¹ Luther signed this dreadful document with the words, "It pleases me, Martin Luther." The words, however, after his signature, suggest that old thoughts still linger in his memory, for "though it may appear cruel to furnish them by the Word, yet it is even more cruel of them to condemn the preaching office and not to teach any certain doctrine to persecute the true doctrine, and, in addition to all this, to seek to destroy the kingdoms of the world." Luther, it is clear, had not shaken himself free from his old tendency to toleration.

An official document sometimes yields more information than a private letter, for it embodies the opinions not of one man but of a body. The preface of the *Smaller Catechism*, 1531, is therefore significant: "Although we neither can nor should force any one into the faith, yet the people must be led to it in order that they may know what is right or wrong in those among whom they live."² In a letter in 1545 to the Elector John Frederick, Philip took occasion to remark that "if this sect (i.e. the Anabaptists) be punished so sternly by us, then we, by our example, give our enemies, the Papists, reasons to behave in exactly the same way, for they regard us as no better than Anabaptists."³

In spite of the views of some German historians, e.g. Paulus, it is impossible to maintain the position that Luther was a persecutor on purely religious grounds. Almost the very last sermon he preached in 1546 had for its text the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, and both the spirit and the letter of compulsion are completely absent from it. Luther in his new attitude was

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 4, pp. 737-40.

² *Werke*, Weim. ed., 30, 1, p. 349; Erl. ed., 21, p. 7.

³ Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens und des Landgrafen Philipp von Hessen zur Täuferbewegung*, pp. 155, 223, 234.

at least as much in fear of the danger to the State as to his Church. Philip of Hesse was also afraid for the very same reason. "We cannot find it in our conscience," he informed the Elector John of Saxony in 1532, "to put any one to death by the sword on account of religion unless we possess clear evidence of other crimes as well." Nor does this statement stand alone. Philip expresses himself just as strongly to the Elector, John's successor, in 1545: "Were all those to be executed," he wrote, "who are not of our faith, what then should happen to the Papists and the Jews, for the latter are guilty of even greater error than the Anabaptists?"¹

Duke George of Saxony had bitterly opposed the coming of Lutheranism to the Duchy, and he persecuted its followers, taking the ground that both the Church and the State had for the last thousand years sanctioned such a measure. Moreover, was not such severity a law of the Holy Roman Empire? Here was a case where Luther felt that his former teaching stood in no need of correction. When Duke George in 1533 banished Lutherans, thereby imitating what the Saxon Visitors had ordered at least six years earlier, the reformer promptly denounced such tyrannous action. Banishment was now found to be "a devilish and criminal thing." Had he not explained in his book *On the Secular Power*, published ten years ago, that the prince had no jurisdiction in religious matters? He now emphasizes this standpoint, still maintaining that the authority of the prince "only extends over life and property in secular matters."²

This very year Philip of Hesse appealed to the Elector John Frederick, begging him to exercise moderation towards the Roman Catholics. He was as uncompromising as Duke George himself. Taking his stand on the memorandum on the execution of the Anabaptists drawn up by the Wittenberg theologians and lawyers for his father, he endorsed their view that such seditious men might with a good conscience suffer the severest penalty of the law.³ In 1527 twelve men and one woman had been executed, and there had been other sufferers in 1530, 1532 and 1538.⁴ The Elector had behind him the Visitation Rules of 1527. His authority must be maintained. "Though it is not our intention," he explained, "to prescribe to any one what he must hold or believe, yet in order to guard

¹ Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens*, p. 156.

² Letter of July 1533, Erl. ed., 31, p. 243 ff.; *Briefwechsel*, 9, p. 318.

³ Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens*, p. 164.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 12, 36, 85.

against rebellions and other disorders, we refuse to recognize or permit any sects or schisms within our principedom." It is not so difficult then to understand why in 1534 in his memorable *Exposition of Psalm ci*, Luther termed David "the scourge of the heretics."¹ He urged Duke Albert of Prussia to expel the Prussians, for their teaching broke the harmony of belief: unity was an essential of the Church and State. In 1533 in his *Home-Postils* he urged the position that "the worldly authorities bear the sword with orders to prevent all scandal, so that it may not enter and inflict harm. But the most dangerous and horrible scandal is where false doctrine and worship penetrates. . . . They (i.e. State officials) must resist it (i.e. such scandal) stoutly, and realize that nothing else will avail save their use of the sword and of the full extent of their power in order to preserve the doctrine pure and the worship clean and undefiled."² The fierceness of his zeal was blinding him increasingly. He rejoiced at the death of those rare spirits, Sir Thomas More and Bishop Fisher, in 1535. His joy arose in part from the circumstance that the latter had just been created a member of the Sacred College. "Oh, that our Right Reverend Cardinals, Popes and Roman Legates," he wrote, "had more kings of England to destroy them." He expressed on December 2, 1536, his satisfaction to King Christian of Denmark when that sovereign expelled his bishops, "who never cease to persecute God's Word and to harass the secular power."³

In 1536 Melanchthon on behalf of the Wittenberg theologians drew up another memorandum, which he, Luther, Bugenhagen and Cruciger signed on June 5.⁴ It covered the same ground as the memorandum of the year 1530. It is evident from the present one that its authors were uncomfortably aware of the dangers of condemning the sectaries on the ground of their teaching. It was, they studiously pointed out, "all the easier to judge them" if they preached sedition. "Some argue," they proceed, "that the secular authorities have no concern whatever with spiritual matters. This is going much too far. . . . The rulers must not only protect the life and property of their subjects, but their chief duty is to promote the honour of God and to prevent blasphemy and idolatry."

The memorialists were familiar with the dislike of Philip

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, pp. 318-20.

² *Ibid.*, Erl. ed., 1², p. 196 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, 55, p. 156; *Briefwechsel*, 11, p. 136.

⁴ *Corp. Reform.*, 3, p. 195 ff.; *Briefwechsel*, 10, p. 347.

of Hesse to use force, and in the memorandum of 1536 they have him in their mind. He had been moving from the path of toleration since 1525, though the first open break did not come till 1530. Now he makes some return to his old position. "Seeing that His Serene Highness the Landgrave informs us that certain leaders and teachers of the Anabaptists . . . have not fulfilled their undertaking (i.e. to leave the country) your Serene Highness may with a good conscience cause them to be punished with the sword, for this reason also, that is, they have not kept their oath or promise. Such is the rule." Then come the exceptions, which were capable of extension in the hands of Philip of Hesse. "Nevertheless, your Serene Highness may at all times allow justice to be temporarily tempered with mercy, according to the circumstances."¹

Luther was not solitary in thinking that justice ought to be tempered with mercy. There were others who had not bowed the knee to the terrible Baal of force, who felt that you could do most things with swords—except sit on them. In 1533 at Augsburg the Lutheran lawyer, Conrad Hel, with Conrad Peutinger and Johann Rehlinger protested that the Town Council had no right to use coercion. The following year Christoph Ehem, a Lutheran patrician of the same town, advocated in his book universal and unconditional toleration, asking the Council to place some bridle and restraint upon his own preachers. Two years later another Lutheran, Johann Forster, entered a plea on behalf of toleration. Bucer was anxious to secure the assistance of the magistrates in putting down Roman Catholic worship, and Forster was no less anxious to dissuade the civic authorities from such a course. As some Nürnberg townsmen in 1530 appealed to Luther's letter of July 1524 to the Saxon princes, so now Forster was confident that the tolerating spirit had not entirely disappeared from the reformer, and accordingly he made a personal appeal to him.

The progress of the Reformation had taken place in spite of persecution: perhaps one may say the progress occurred in part on account of persecution. For it is impossible to believe half-heartedly when the stake is the penalty. There were Lutherans whose faith in justification waxed strong in the inquisitor's torture-chamber. There is a fierce joy in enduring the rack for a creed that is dearer than life. From this standpoint, force is a vital condition of all religious beginnings. Under its influence loose ideas become firm, and

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 10, p. 346.

the vacillator turns resolute. It is possible that the relaxation of persecution is partly the reason of the scepticism of our own day. Our faith is wavering because we are not liable to suffer death for it. Similarly to-day there is many a fervent patriot in the trenches and at home who five years ago was lukewarm in his loyalty.

NOTE ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSECUTION

There are stray references to this subject in many books. *Theology in Extremis: Or a Soliloquy that may have been delivered in India, June 1857*, by Sir Alfred Lyall, possesses insight in the matter. Tennyson characterized it as a fine poem: as a contribution to the understanding of the past it is no less fine. "They would have spared life to any of their English prisoners who should consent to profess Mahometanism, by repeating the usual short formula; but only one half-caste cared to save himself in that way." Cf. Lyall's *Verses written in India*, 9-17.

CHAPTER IX

THE REFORM OF THE CHURCH

ORTHODOX Germany watched the changes in the relationship of Church and State with growing suspicion. After the decisive victory the Emperor gained over Francis I at the battle of Pavia, 1525, the Treaty of Madrid was signed, 1526, binding the two monarchs to suppress Lutheranism in Germany. On March 23, 1526, Charles admonished certain princes and rulers of the empire to employ their influence with their neighbours for the eradication of heretical doctrines. He commended the anti-Lutheran league, formed by Duke George of Saxony, Duke Henry of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, and the Electors of Brandenburg and Mayence. The Emperor announced that after his return from Rome he would resort to every measure for the extirpation of heresy. Inevitably league was met by league. Protestant princes like John of Saxony, Philip of Hesse, Dukes Otto, Ernest and Francis of Brunswick-Lüneburg, and the Count of Mansfield joined in an alliance to defend the evangelical party. Cities like Magdeburg and Nürnberg supported them. The opposing bodies met at the Diet of Spires, June 1526. According to Spalatin it was the boldest and freest ever held. In the absence of Charles, who was fighting the Pope, Ferdinand presided. Acting on his brother's instructions, he demanded the enforcement of the Edict of Worms and a decree of the Diet, forbidding all innovations in worship and doctrine. If those two imperial demands were complied with, he promised that the Emperor would induce the Pope to call a General Council for the settlement of the religious problems. The delegate from the cities pointed out that it was impossible to secure the observance of the Edict of Worms. The committee of princes numbered among its members the Bishops of Würzburg, Strassburg, Freisingen and Georg Truchess for the spiritual; the Princes of Hesse, the Palatinate, and Baden, and the Count of Solms for the temporal. The remarkable report they issued was naturally a compromise, but a compromise

very largely favourable to the reforming side. The Diet, in effect, decreed that the Word of God should be preached without disturbance; that indemnity should be granted for past offences against the Diet of Worms, and that until the meeting of a General Council each State should "so live, rule and bear itself as it thought it could answer to God and the Emperor."

At the Diet of Nürnberg in 1523 the Estates passed resolutions which received imperial approval. These, however, had not been enforced, especially the orders against "revolutionary writing and poetizing, and against the printing, selling, and hawking of calumnious literature and other forbidden books."¹ The representatives of the towns on August 1 handed in their gravamina against the clergy. As usual, finance formed its main burden. The laity resented the fees for religious services such as baptism and marriage, death taxes, extreme unction, burial, purchase of candles, the endowment of anniversaries and similar services for the dead, charges in connexion with relieving souls from purgatory, indulgences, services, compulsory tithing, rents, surplice fees, voluntary contributions demanded at intervals, the general custom of begging not only by the friars but also by the monks and nuns, and the indebtedness of many to ecclesiastical foundations which, in spite of the canon law, charged interest. They proceeded to demand the gradual abolition of the mendicant friars, of monasteries and convents, and of the celibacy of the clergy. They also desired that in view of past abuses the secular authorities should have power to remove unfit pastors and preachers, that the management and revenues of hospitals should be placed in lay and not in clerical hands. Some pleaded that with regard to ceremonies each individual was to be at liberty to act until a free, Christian, impartial Council met. In the meantime preaching was to be unhindered unless it tended to stir up sedition.² Some delegates proposed, after the tradition of Caliph Omar, the burning of all other books in order that the Gospel and the Gospel only should be preached; but this proposal was defeated.³

That these demands were gradually increased is due to the open help the delegates were receiving from the strife between the Emperor and the Pope, the advance of the Turks, and from

¹ Bucholtz, III, pp. 601-2.

² Friedensburg, *Der Reichstag zu Speier in 1526*, pp. 543-51; Höfler, *Charitas Pirckheimer*, LII-LIV.

³ Seckendorf, II, p. 45.

the secret help they were no less certainly receiving from Francis I.

The concentration of Clement VII in Italian politics was so great that Lutheranism escaped his sight. The German papal briefs steadily diminished, and from 1526-1529 the relations between Germany and the Roman Curia ceased at the very time when the cause of reform was steadily advancing.¹ Sulieman I, the Diet heard, was encamping in Hungary with an army of 200,000 men, and by the battle of Mohacz, 1526, won the greater part of that country. Francis I had been plotting the expulsion of the Hapsburgs from the imperial throne. One of his methods was the election of a King of the Romans, who should, in conjunction with the other electors, conclude an alliance with France.² The Turk in the east and the French in the west worked harmoniously together. Henry VIII was one day to prove a strange Defender of the Faith, but no less strange defenders of Protestantism are Sulieman I, the Mohammedan, and Francis I, the eldest son of the Church. In spite of the menace in the plains of Hungary, the delegates persisted in their refusal to ratify the assistance promised to Charles V "until the towns had been reassured with regard to the holy faith, and the oppression of the clergy removed from them."³ Under these circumstances the Archduke Ferdinand gave his assent to an ordinance of the Diet which in effect allowed the preachers of the Evangel to deliver their message.⁴ Just five years before Luther had been put to the ban of the empire. Just six years before he had been excommunicated by the Church. Both had combined to destroy him. Now in effect he had destroyed them. The Protestant State Churches had acquired a foundation for their existence. The toleration granted by the religious peace of Augsburg, 1555, was clearly outlined. Such a suspensive period of governmental activity as that laid down in the clause that each ruler should conduct himself so as to be able to defend his course before God and the Emperor meant a practical liberty for the new body to develop. The Protestant States and cities rightly interpreted the decision of the Diet as in

¹ Friedensburg, *Nuntiaturberichte*, I, xlvi.

² K. Lanz, *Staatspapiere zur Geschichte des Kaisers Karl V*, pp. 20-2. Cf. Brewer, IV, 1305, No. 2919.

³ *Reichstagsakten*, XLI, fol. 42-9.

⁴ Cf. T. Brieger, *Der Speierer Reichstag und die religiöse Frage*; W. Walther, *Für Luther*, 330 ff.; W. Friedensburg, *Der Reichstag zu Speier*, 478 f., 481-2, and his article in *Archiv. für Reformationsgesch.*, 7, 93 ff.; F. W. Hassenkamp, *Hessische Kirchengeschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, I, 297; Baumgarten, 2, 562; Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 234-9.

their favour. Within three years almost the whole of north Germany, except Brandenburg, Ducal Saxony and Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, became adherents of the banned and excommunicated Luther. It was a triumph for the reformer: it was no less a triumph for the territorial prince. At the Diet of Worms a definite limit of time had been imposed on the suspension, whereas now it was treated as still open, when as a matter of fact it had been settled. Such a plan suited Luther, it suited Charles—he never could have brought himself to sign a formal recognition of the principle of toleration—and it suited Germany. *Nondum* was the motto the Emperor, or rather the Spanish king, inscribed on his shield, and it was prophetic of his deliberate and hesitating career. Legal the plan of toleration was not: practical it eminently was. It did not authorize the establishment of the principle *Cujus regio, ejus religio* in law, yet it allowed such a growth that less than thirty years later this principle was admitted.

The reference to a General Council ought to have pleased Erasmus: here was a triumph for his favourite idea. But for some time he had been in a state of amazement at the violence with which Luther had treated his justification of the freedom of the will. To Reginald Pole he expressed his astonishment at this outburst of rage. Herein he did not exhibit his usual perspicacity. To Luther the attack was waged on the most vital point of his whole theology: if man possessed free will, where was the certainty of his message? Granted that he was the divinely inspired messenger of God, then he saw the justification of his system. The very foundations of his theological scheme were now mined, and he expressed his horror of the miner in no measured terms. To the faculty of Paris Erasmus confessed his dismay, and he wrote to John a Lasco and Francis Sylvius that he felt like the gladiators obliged to fight in the arena with the tigers and the lions.¹ He appealed to the Elector of Saxony, protesting loudly against the violence of the *De Servo Arbitrio*. In his turn the Elector appealed to Luther, who begged him to resist the "Viper."² The Elector therefore refused to interfere in a purely theological quarrel, failing to perceive that the sources of the quarrel went to the very root of the matter.

Taking the question into his own hands, Erasmus wrote a stern letter to Luther, breathing forth the indignation which

¹ Erasmus to Lasco, March 8, 1526; Erasmus to Sylvius, March 13, 1526 (Le Clerc).

² Luther to John of Saxony, April 26, 1526 (De Wette).

fills the first part of the *Hyperaspistes*.¹ Much is made of the storm in which both religion and humanism are about to be swallowed up. Once he had been friendly to the Reformation: the wonderful success of Luther was then not unjustified. To-day the frightful excesses of his partisans had ruined the noble cause of the Gospel. Those who cry out that they must die a thousand deaths for the Gospel are the men whose lives are alienating the majority of men. Germany is sacked by them, by their mistakes letters are falling into discredit: hateful controversies animate the minds of men and the old ignorance is returning. Even the old unsupportable tyranny of the monks is making a reappearance. Far from being aggressive to Luther, his book displayed an almost excessive moderation. To this calmness Luther responds by insults which might well have come from a drunkard. Erasmus hears that he writes in Latin in order that the people might have no part in the discussion, whereas Luther translates his work into German. It is to the ordinary ignorant people he addresses himself, it is before the public of smiths, curriers, peasants, he indites his calumnies; and these are the sort of people favourable to Luther, but not knowing Erasmus, tasting the outrages of the former but not understanding the replies of the latter. Luther threw some doubt on the absolute disinterestedness of Erasmus. The scholar returns the accusation. Luther must have more importance than he would have had if he had not raised all this trouble. As for his love of glory he had obtained all the satisfaction he desires, seeing he is to-day a true tyrant: he has satellites, supporters, collaborators, translators to his orders. Nothing is lacking save the diadem. Erasmus gives the details as to these collaborators. In spite of abuse, in spite of the poisoned honey of flattery, Erasmus remains unmoved. The friend of peace, he will remain faithful to Catholicism while waiting for the more perfect constitution of the Church.

Erasmus is not hopeless. In 1526 he has been able to write to J. Henckel, secretary to the Queen of Hungary, "what the power, what the attraction of the Evangel is, the times show us plainly. In the name of the Evangel, and in that alone, we see the whole world roused from its lethargy and stripped of its past."²

In the *Paraphrases* Erasmus showed himself aware that

¹ Erasmus to Luther, April 11, 1526 (Le Clerc). Cf. esp. pp. 1253 and 1258; cf. also *Contra calumniosissimam M. Lutheri, Opp.*, IX², p. 1538.

² *Epist.*, p. 914; to J. Henckel, March 7, 1526.

there were tendencies to scepticism at work, and in it he defended the immortality of the soul.¹ Since 1524 he detected attacks on this doctrine and on the doctrine of the Providential government of the world. In 1527 he told Vergera that forms of "Ciceronianism" were at bottom a movement to freedom of thought.² A certain type of man doubts everything, except himself. Erasmus perceives that the spirit of rationalism is abroad. In order, however, to conquer it he will not, like Luther, sacrifice both reason and liberty. He will not oppose nature and grace: he will seek a victory in their reconciliation. Erasmus saw signs that Pomponazzi's sceptical attitude to the immortality of the soul was influencing men in a growing degree. When they doubted this immortality they proceeded to wonder if God guided the destinies of the world. In a pregnant paragraph F. W. H. Myers tells us that when he was walking one night with George Eliot in the Fellows' Garden, Trinity College, Cambridge, "she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet-calls of men—the words, God, Immortality, Duty—pronounced with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third." Men were beginning to realize how hard it was to believe in immortality, and with this semi-realization, in spite of George Eliot's dictum, they were beginning to find duty neither peremptory nor absolute. Erasmus was not perhaps so passionately attached to the dogma of the immortality of the soul as Tennyson, nevertheless it was a dogma he had long defended. In his *Paraphrases on St. Luke* he had offered a vigorous defence of this doctrine. The attacks of Dolet on the *Enchiridion* and the *Paraphrases* do not change his determination to pursue the synthesis between nature and grace. Dolet was a devoted humanist in whose humanism there is nothing Christian. He believes neither in love nor morality.³ His attitude to death is simply Stoic resignation.⁴ From Pomponazzi he has learnt arguments against the immortality of the soul, and his outlook resembles George Eliot's, save that her "choir invisible" enabled others to lead lives made better by their presence, while he believed that immortality was the chance of one's books being handed down to posterity.

¹ *Paraph.*, Luke xx. p. 442.

² *Epist.*, p. 1021; to Vergera, Oct. 13, 1527.

³ Dolet, *Carmina*, I, 21.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 15.

Everything in the universe, Erasmus argues in his *Hyperaspistes*, is a mixture of good and evil, of truth and error. How can man escape from this law? It explains life: the contrariety of our longings, the difference between creed and conduct.¹ It is the foundation of our theories and our methods of education. If we are born equally intelligent and good, what are the origins of ignorance and evil? If we are born equally bad, what an enigma are our leanings to good and our fitness for progress? And what a condition would be ours: it would be worse than that of the brute beast who is at least capable of gratitude, of kindness and of power. In the *Diatriba* he believes in stages in the progress of the race, and in *Hyperaspistes* he sets forth the same inspiring view. Plato teaches the creation of the world and the immortality of the soul. Philosophers discover that God was spirit, and sovereign power, present everywhere and circumscribed nowhere.² The law of nature imposes a standard of duty; our will has as good an ideal held up before it. Human wisdom separates honour from utility, proclaims the excellence of devotion, and preaches such homely virtues as shame and moderation, generosity and justice.³ Such ideas are the very ones we find in the Decalogue. Indeed he had long identified the law of nature and the law of Moses.⁴ Apart from grace, man has given practical proofs that he recognized virtue by the light of nature. Antiquity had its monsters, an Alcibiades or a Tiberius. It had, however, an Aristides and a Socrates, a Decius and a Cato. True, it has known remorse; it has also known beneficence, tasted the sweetness of forgiveness and the heroism of sacrifice. Was this nobility of great souls only pride and delusion?

The law of nature and the law of grace are the same in kind, though not in degree. This same law enabled the flower of the classical world to be heroes and sages. They were, however, on the mountain-top of humanism, where they could not notice the myriads of plants, vegetables in the valley. "Man," such is the conclusion, "by himself can will something good: he cannot effectively will the good which leads him to happiness."⁵ The law of Moses, with its detailed rites and ceremonies, gave men a framework. True, it was external, nevertheless it "accustomed the rebellious people to Divine commands and led them, as it were by the hand, to the perception of spiritual

¹ *Hyperaspistes*, pp. 1401, 1403.

² *Ibid.*, p. 1294. Cf. pp. 1461, 1463, 1517, 1529.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1463.

⁴ *Paraph.*, 1 Cor. ix. 8, p. 888.

⁵ *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1403.

matters.”¹ As in the *Diatribē*, he dwells on the value of the general consent of the Fathers. Their consent creates agreement among the bishops and the faithful, becoming a reasoned belief, a general belief, which is almost a revelation.²

George of Saxony was pleased with the *Hyperaspistes*.³ Melanchthon was equally displeased with it. He was well aware, he told Camerarius, that the *De Servo Arbitrio* would call forth a response in which abuse would take the place of argument.⁴ He indeed expressed in this letter his fears that the violence of his friend Luther was continually increasing. To Gelenius he wrote that now was consummated the rupture of humanism and the Reformation, the two movements he desired to see bound in the bonds of the closest intimacy. It was high time the bickering ceased. Melanchthon decided to keep quiet and he implored Luther to follow this course, seeing that a response was useless.

To Lefèvre and to Simon Pistorius Erasmus confides his hopes and fears. To the first he writes: “We see with what kind of literature the Lutherans fill the world. Nor are those documents a whit more sane which are written on the other side by certain theologians. From the collision of such books, what else arises except conflagration? The same result happens from the meetings and speeches of both parties: so they wildly abuse one another and the rope of contention is strained. If the factious members are removed from the schools and are succeeded by those who, on the contrary, teach approved and necessary literature, nothing will be accomplished. There is no end of disputing. The promoters of the disapproved party would have to be removed: and specially some ring-leaders; and in their place decent men would have to be elected, who would have nothing to do with the dogma of contentions, but who would only hand down such teaching as would without controversy make for piety and good morals. The schools and professorships of languages would be entrusted to those who, free from all party spirit, would teach things useful to the boys. But at present certain persons, while they are carried away by uncontrollable hatred against Luther, aim at the destruction both of the best literature and the students of the same, thrusting into the camp of Luther those whom they ought to have attracted. Meantime they vent their rage on innocent victims

¹ *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1348 ff.

² Preface to Book II.

³ George's letter to Luther (Lehmann), April 16, 1526.

⁴ Melanchthon's letter to Camerarius, April 11, 1526, *Melanchth., Op.*

under the name of piety. Against the promoters of sedition we ought rightly to vent our rage, but only to such a degree that, as far as is possible, no innocent persons are injured, no sensible persons alienated, and the multitude spared. And perhaps it would be better to obtain this from the states where this groundwork has become strong: viz. that each party has its own place and that each is left to reckon with its conscience until time brings forth some opportunity of agreement. Meantime let severe punishment be meted out to those who attempt sedition. Meantime let us ourselves immediately correct certain matters from which this evil springs, and let the other matters be referred to a General Council. But of these at another time more fully, or rather face to face, if I shall see that the matter meets with your approval. Meantime I beg this of you by our friendship, that you may not proceed to irritate against us those hornets unless you wish Erasmus extinguished.”¹

The critical genius of the writer is evident in his letter: the constructive genius is absent. He was far too reluctant to mend for fear of marring. He failed to understand, as Luther did, the gravity of the times in which he lived. Erasmus himself declared that while he was at work a certain demon seemed to take possession of him, and to carry him on without his will. His pen, as it were, dictated statesmanlike conceptions which he was incapable of carrying out. Always ailing, he did not possess the rude health which normally accompanies vigorous leadership. Men no longer required a scholar and a critic: they required a leader, a visionary. Power he possessed in no scanty measure, but he under-estimated his opportunities for its exercise. Men asked for bread and received a stone. All his life Luther believed what he wished to believe; it was one great source of his strength. It made him prompt, fearless, decisive, a daring guide in extremity. What constructive work could be expected from one who reckoned authority at so high a rate as the humanist? *Cogito, ergo sum*—“I think, therefore I am”—believed Descartes. “I think because I am not,” Erasmus acted. He was far-sighted though not clear-sighted, and the times then demanded clearness of vision. Of Fabius the Romans said, “One man by dilatory tactics restored our prosperity.” Of Erasmus the Germans could say, “One man by dilatory tactics ruined our prosperity.” Erasmus knew what he wanted, and his powers in working for it were almost unlimited. He did not, however, possess that great quality of his rival—instinctive sympathy for the condition under

¹ Erasmus to Faber, 1526, *Epist.*, DCCCXLIII, 961 D.

which his task has to be achieved. He was endowed with greater power for influencing individuals than managing a party such as Luther created. He, like Halifax, possessed the enviable gift of anticipating the judgment of succeeding ages, yet he, unlike Halifax, failed to understand his own.

Simon Pistorius was as devoted a Churchman and a classicist as Erasmus himself.¹ He adhered to the dogmas of the Church as warmly as he adhered to the writers of antiquity. Erasmus tells him, "Moreover as to your pleading my case before the Emperor, so as to ascertain that I never willingly departed from the prescribed teachings of the Church, I do not quite understand, my Pistorius, what he means, I who wittingly or unwittingly never turned aside from the accepted doctrines of the Church."² But we must distinguish the constitutions of the Church—some are of the general councils, some are from the rescripts, some are peculiar to certain bishops, some are of the Roman pontiff, but like the plebiscites which are constitutions in secret. Again of the decrees of the councils, some are for all time, some are temporal, given for a particular occasion. . . . And to confess partly what is the fact: as this fatal tumult was increasing, I was plainly of opinion that, when some constitutions were changed, this disturbance might be lulled into some degree of tranquillity. Meantime, I say nothing about the vices which under the pretext of religion have crept into the Church and have so far prevailed that they have almost extinguished any spark of evangelical vigour. All persons do not understand what this means. The princes act rightly when they make provision that there be no relaxation of the bonds that bind the public fabric. This is indeed a matter of conscience. Now when I see that neither party is willing to make any concessions to the other, the one burden of my prayer is that God may grant a happy issue: for I do not see who else can. Many think that by punishments and laws this evil can be lulled to rest, but only for a time: and even if it can be calmed for ever, there will not cease to be silent murmurings and judgments of conscience.

"Nor would the authority of the Church be weakened if some matters were changed by the leaders of the Church for strong reasons—a thing which has already been repeatedly done by our ancestors. . . . I suspect that this suggestion has been

¹ Kampschulte, I., pp. 27, 71.

² Cf. the similar attitude of Budé in his *Epistolæ*, Budé to Flisco, Dec. 13, 1521, p. 349; Delaruelle, *G. Budé*, 263-4; and Budé, *De transitu Hellenismi*, p. 154.

thrown out by some Lutherans with this object, that if I would advise what suited them, they might have me as their subservient tool ; but if not, I might kindle against myself the bitter hatred of this state. For with all their might some were contending for this, that all things might be done here which we see being done at Zürich : a perpetual seal of silence is pledged. So I have retained a plan in consideration of the present position of the state, for it is due to the republic alone that I should not inaugurate a tragedy here, dangerous not only to myself, nor surrender the authority of the Church to the arbitration of any chance persons. And yet his plan, however temperate, so pleased the Consul that he arranges three months before—not intending to make it public unless some person of the ecclesiastical party had demanded it. Certainly by that plan no innovation is made here except that all these things have been carried out more moderately than they began. . . . As to what I wrote, that neither party seems to me to be sober-minded, the Church is not attacked, but certain persons who thrust more upon us than is necessary to believe. This is said against certain theologians and monks, not against the Church. The Transalpines wish us to confess that the Roman pontiff alone is more powerful than all the Churches and the Christian people. The Cisalpines hold certain articles, some of which I do not like to defend, and yet, unless I did so, they would raise their voices (against me). Hence I did not say that I was on neither side, but that I was pledged to neither side. A person who is pledged is subservient in all things. Not only must he be subservient to views, but even to customs and dispositions which I find to be very corrupt in some who wish with much loud talk to do the business of the Church.

“Concerning the Lutheran books that ought not henceforth to be altogether rejected, this seems to be a fitting time considering the state of this republic. If the Church would permit the use of the Sacrament under each form I do not see ever so little disadvantage, for the Bohemian Church allowed it formerly. Nor yet do I approve of any one exciting disturbance on this account among a Christian people. I am not in favour of allowing priests to marry, nor would I relax the vows of the monks, unless that is done with the sanction of the Pontiff to the edifying of the Church, not to its destruction. I think it inhuman to constrain youths or girls to such an extent, and righteous to free from blame the captives. It would be in the highest degree desirable that priests or monks should cherish chastity and a godlike life. But in our present degenerate state the lesser

evil should perhaps be accepted. If this opinion does not please those set over the Church, let it be considered a fancy. As to what you write about the impious licence of some, no man has been more inclined to such things by me, but I have even restrained many. I have fears of paganism, I see Judaism has already got hold everywhere. If all of us, clerical and lay, great and small, would turn with sincere hearts to Christ the founder of our faith, confessing each one his faults, and would with one accord in prayer implore His mercy, in a short time we should see a happy issue out of all this disturbance. Now while most persons are intent on their private advantage, they do not even properly take counsel for the public weal. As to the poor opinion that you have of Greek literature because of one or two points detected, this is quite out of keeping with your prudence and the candour of your disposition. You should think in the same way of all good literature. But as to the fact that several among the professors of this literature were not prejudiced against Luther, in some instances this was their depravity, and they carried on a truceless war for many years by land and sea against this class of studies that is reviving among us.”¹

The attitude to dogma in this letter is quite characteristic of the writer : it is also characteristic of all times of stress in theological questions. There is to Erasmus a certain intellectual element in religion from the very first : there are a few essentials of knowledge without which no man can become or be a Christian. But the great mass of doctrine comes second both in point of time and importance : the order is still that of the Master, “If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine.” For the great majority of believers the place of minute and sharply defined doctrines is taken first and last by all those vague and dumb impressions which form such a powerful factor in all the departments of human life. The great question now before Erasmus is not to lay before men a set of minute doctrines, however good, to which they must bring themselves into allegiance by whatever effort. The great matter is rather to bring men into a condition of life in which they can corroborate these doctrines from their own experience. Erasmus shares the doubt which searches, not the doubt which denies. There is need of dogma, there is a Christian truth in Christianity ; only instead of placing it all at the outset the greater part of it is to be placed at the end. Instead of deriving the Christian life from it, it is itself largely the product of the

¹ 1526, *Epist.*, DCCCXLVIII, 967 A.

Christian life. In great part it is the special work of the intellect reflecting upon the life already existing, examining its foundations, its nature, and its elements. That life contains as one of its factors an intellectual element, an irreducible minimum, at least of doctrine : and so far doctrine is primary. But these ideas, really indispensable to the existence of religious life, are relatively few in number. By far the greater part of theology consists in the work of the intellect on these primary ideas and on life in general.

To a dogmatist like Luther such ideas were unacceptable. Erasmus was still troubled by the *De Servo Arbitrio*. He knew only too well that his *Hyperaspistes* was not an exhaustive refutation of the able book of his opponent. George of Saxony implored him to continue a labour so brilliantly begun.¹ Unfortunately for himself he yielded, and in April 1527 he set to work, and on September 1, 1527, the second part of the *Hyperaspistes* appeared. The horror of the destruction wrought is evident. Luther has not been able to preserve the indispensable favour of princes, bishops, and true theologians. He has destroyed without knowing how to replace. The constitutions of the Church, unction, tonsure, Mass, song, churches, sacred images, liturgical vestments, ceremonies, schools, studies, letters, all have been displaced. What is there to succeed ? For lack of peaceful reform, revolts and repressions are equally horrible, and does not the monkish yoke threaten to be heavier than ever ? Whatever might be the value of his theories, he declared solemnly that he abided by the judgment of the Church, "ready to correct everything which departed from the truth."

In a letter written the day the second part of the *Hyperaspistes* was published Erasmus analysed for the benefit of Charles V the difficulties and dangers of his situation. "He had drawn upon himself the hatred of the whole Lutheran party," and his life was not safe if the Emperor refused his protection.² The reply of Charles was gratifying: "Thanks to you alone, Christianity has arrived at results to which the emperors, the popes, the princes, and all the efforts of learned men have been unable to attain."³

To Duke George Erasmus says: "The Emperor and Ferdinand seem to look to severity as if to a sacred anchor, and indeed they provoke to this those who wish any amount of licence granted to them under the name of evangelicism. I

¹ Duke George to Erasmus, Jan. 1, 1527, Jortin.

² Erasmus to Charles V, Sept. 2, 1527, Le Clerc.

³ Charles V to Erasmus, Dec. 13, 1527, Le Clerc.

fear that things may go from bad to worse. The lust for plunder will rouse many even against the innocent, and anybody who possesses anything will be in danger. Those who have nothing will profit from the evils of others, as usually happens in war. And hence there will follow general chaos. If this evil cannot be suddenly removed, at least it must be skilfully mitigated for a time, until the disease will admit of medical treatment. It is hard to have recourse to amputation and cauterizing when the greater part of the system is impregnated with the malady. The medical treatment is fatal which destroys more than it cures. If anything is at fault in any part, it should be removed by prudent moderation in accordance with the sanction and authority of princes, then the result, I think, would be less fraught with bloodshed. I pray that He who knows what is best for mankind may deign to infuse into the minds of the princes such counsels as may restore to us true piety together with holy harmony, since I see nothing else now remains for us save prayer.”¹

That it required courage to pen this letter is obvious. It was not long since a Florentine preacher of reform had been done to death. The Inquisition was at work and its arm was long. The factious and the powerful could not feel satisfaction when they knew that denunciations of party and of vested interests formed the staple of the letters of the humanist. Nothing but an urgent sense of duty made him address popes and prelates, kings and princes on the necessity of reform. He at least made an attempt to escape from the traditions of the past by which all are enveloped. A man whose sole desire was to live on terms of intimacy with great men in Church and State would never have imperilled his position by writing such letters and, above all, by continuing to write them. Sheer timidity or self-caution was not the motive that dictated them. The influence of the scholar's life is not to be entirely measured by his published work. It was not only that he freely communicated his knowledge or advice, or issued his books freely. His learning was an instrument for throwing steady light on the controversies of the time, and such an instrument exercised an influence not devoid of effect. The sixteenth century was not only an age of revolution, it was also an age of preparation for the future growth of toleration.

To Archbishop Warham Erasmus complains of his persecution by the monks, and insists on his services to theology. If princes do not use efforts to restrain the disorders of the world,

¹ Erasmus to Duke George, Dec. 30, 1527, *Epist.*, DCCCCXIX, 1050 F.

they will not be able to do so when they would.¹ He writes to More even in a more despondent tone. Things now, he believes, are in such a state that he must look out for a grave where he may rest after death in quiet, since that is not possible in this life. The heresy of the Anabaptist is more widely diffused than any one suspects.²

Sometimes hopeful, sometimes despairing, Erasmus on the whole seemed throughout the year 1528 to be less perplexed than he had been for some time. His disgust towards the movement was not lessened by the tales he heard about the apostate priests and the religious. "They seek," he told Pirkheimer, "two things, an income and a wife; besides, the Evangel affords them freedom to live as they please."³ In a letter to the Strassburg preacher, Martin Bucer, he says, "Those who have given up the recital of the canonical hours do not now pray at all; many who have laid aside the pharisaical dress are really worse than they were before."⁴ He admits that "the first thing that makes me draw back from this company is that I see so many among this troop becoming altogether estranged from the purity of the Gospel. Some I knew as excellent men before they joined this sect; what they are now, I know not, but I hear that many have become worse and none better." The Lutheran cause is prospering "because priests and monks take wives contrary to human laws, or at any rate contrary to their vow. Look around and see whether their marriages are more chaste than those of others upon whom they look as heathen."⁵

To Queen Catherine he writes that the nobility of her birth, her exalted rank, and her marriage with a prosperous sovereign like Henry VIII are as nothing in contributing to her happiness compared with her gifts. It is most rare to find a lady, born and brought up at Court, placing all her hopes and solace in devotion and the reading of the Scripture. Would that others, widows at all events, would take example from her, and not widows only, but unmarried ladies, by devoting themselves to the service of Christ! He is a solid rock, the spouse of all pious souls, and nearer to each than the nearest tie. The soul that is devoted to this husband is not less grateful in adversity than in prosperity. He knows what is expedient for

¹ Erasmus to Warham, Aug. 1527, *Epist.*, p. 1051.

² Erasmus to More, Feb. 28, 1528, *Epist.*, p. 1062.

³ Erasmus to Pirkheimer, 1528, *Epist.*, p. 1139. Cf. Schmidt, *Melanchthon*, 118.

⁴ Erasmus to Bucer, *Epist.*, p. 1030.

⁵ *Op.*, 10, p. 1578 *et seq.*

all, and is often more propitious when He changes the sweet for the bitter. Every one must take up his cross; there is no entrance into heavenly glory without it. These are the blessings which none can take away.¹

Erasmus continued to expose the grievances in ecclesiastical life and to demand in dignified language a reformation. In his *Diatrobe*, 1524, he declared that he submitted himself in all to the authority of the Church. His attitude to dogma he clearly defines, "On all points which are of the faith, I have a free conscience towards God."² The popes were anxious to secure his enormous influence on behalf of orthodoxy. A Spanish theologian, who had composed an *Antapologia* against the humanist to reinforce the attack of the Prince of Carpi, informs us that Clement VII glanced through his book, remarking to him that "the Holy See has never set the seal of its approbation on the spirit of Erasmus, but it has spared him in order that he might not separate himself from the Church and embrace the cause of Lutheranism to the detriment of our interests."³ Paul III desired to make him a cardinal, but the scholar refused this dignity on account of his age.

Luther was well aware that Erasmus frequently protested that he had never any intention of writing anything contrary to revelation and the common faith of Christendom; that he submitted himself to the decisions of the popes; and that he was ready to accept what the Church taught even though he might not understand the reasons and be personally inclined to embrace the opposite. The two differed in such fundamental matters as the effect of the fall of Adam, the meaning of justification and the free will of man. To Michel, Bishop of Langres, Erasmus offers an explanation which he finds in the duality of the reformer. "In Luther," he testifies, "I find to my surprise two different persons. One writes in such a way that he seems to breathe the apostolic spirit, the other makes use of such unbecoming invective as to appear to be altogether unmindful of it."⁴ To another bishop he writes in a similar strain, "Whatever of good there may be in Luther's teaching and exhortations we shall put in practice, not because it emanates from him, but because it is true and agrees with Holy Scripture."⁵

¹ Erasmus to Queen Catherine, *Epist.*, p. 1062.

² *Op.*, 10, p. 1538.

³ Cf. Baumgarten, II, 631; Ehses in the *Röm. Quartalschr.*, 1894, 477; Hess, I, 317 ff.; Menendez y Pelayo, *Hist. de los heterodoxos españ.*, II, 36 ff.; Maurenbrecher, 270, 406; Villa, 253; *Histor. Zeitschr.*, LIII, 155.

⁴ Erasmus to Bishop Michel, March 13, 1526, *Epist.*, 3, p. 919.

⁵ Sept. 1, 1528, *Epist.*, 3, p. 1104. Ioan. Genesisius Sepulveda Cordubensis, *De rebus gestis Caroli Quinti*, in his *Op.*, I (Matriti, 1780), p. 468.

To the Elector Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, he delivers his soul. "Everything was progressing favourably but for the seditious wickedness of certain persons, who, while endeavouring suddenly to give a new world to us by diverse opinions and contentious teachings, almost tore to pieces the very fabric of the community and upset the harmony of the Church. And thereby the results of so many weary nights of toil and sweat endured by me for so many years almost went for nothing. But my own individual inconvenience would give me but little concern if the public weal did not similarly suffer, and, above all, the glory of Christ, which ought to be the one great aim and object of all our actions. For nothing can be really prosperous or truly happy in human affairs unless that which Christ worketh in us, so that our human affections being dormant our will may be submissive to His will. Already there was more than enough of those maladies even if the implacable hate of the monks had not been added, which, though it had brought such an amount of calamity into the world, yet day by day was becoming more intense, threatening to culminate in utter chaos and confusion, unless some divine intervention, like a *deus ex machina*, suddenly appearing on the scene, bring about some unexpected exit to this stormy tragedy. We, however, in this scene of turmoil, in circumstances that are almost desperate, since no other course is open save prayer, still cling to the wreckage of the ship, in the hope that Christ may somewhere show us poor storm-tossed mariners some port of security. Nor do I altogether cast away all hope, if God in whose hands are the hearts of kings may deign to control the minds of the princes, so that they may deem it a far nobler thing to conquer anger than to vanquish an enemy, and a much safer thing to establish a kingdom by kindness than by force: and that a reputation for mercy is a more potent influence in extending the boundaries of one's sway than a reputation for force.

"Peace cannot be achieved all in a moment in a scene of general and widespread perturbation and confusion, but a truce is possible, at least for some years. Meantime it would be possible to consider calmly how to mend matters. What I am afraid of just now is that we may have a kind of Cadmean victory, as they call it, a victory which is as woeful to the conquerors as to the conquered. But here, as I have said already, I can do nothing but pray. I have again and again urged the Emperor to peace. He thus replies in his last letter: 'There is no proper reason why any person should doubt that

we have strenuously put forth all the efforts which were in our power to secure peace in each state, while as to what efforts we shall put forth in future we prefer to show these by actions.'

"These words do not savour very much of peace. But although a great war draws in its train all manner of maladies and woes, these nevertheless render people afflicted rather than impious. The crash of opinions and beliefs is more serious; it robs us of our good feeling, and this is the most precious of all things. And in this case the obstinacy of the contending parties is almost greater than that of the monarchs at war: and by a curious kind of fatality it so happens that no persons injure a cause—be it this or that cause—more than the very persons who seem to themselves to be most heroically championing it. For some persons draw so fiercely the rope of contention in opposite directions that, as the proverb puts it, the rope breaks when it is overstrained and both parties fall on their backs. It is not necessary to question into everything, much less to pronounce judgment on everything. It is better to treat of those matters which have a particular bearing on evangelical teaching. The world has certain laws and rights of its own, the schools have their exercise-grounds for discussion: but let nothing be delivered to the people except that which is not to be questioned, which is necessary for the working of faith, which conduces to pious living. To take one example: Some persons emphasize the confessional too much, others on the contrary want to do away with it altogether, though there might be a mean between the two extremes. Likewise certain persons have carried the Mass so far that it almost becomes with unlearned and sordid priests, or rather sacrificers, a source of profit and ground of confidence for evil-living men: others again would totally abrogate it. But here, too, there is room for moderation whereby we might have a more holy and pure Mass, and yet might avoid having none at all. In a similar way certain persons in their extreme and superstitious worship of spirit almost obscure the worship of Christ. Some persons strive utterly to overthrow all the status of the monks: others on the contrary lay too much emphasis on their constitutions, ceremonies, titles, and kinds of vesture.

"In these and all other matters it might be brought about by prudent moderation that we might hold the dogma of faith more certainly and better; that the confession might be improved and made less irksome; the Mass might be more sacred and more venerated, we might have priests and monks, if fewer in number, yet certainly better. But although this

world-wide storm or tempest causes me excruciating agony, nevertheless there is still some residue of hope in me, that it will yet happen Divine Providence will overrule these storms to bring about a good result. To this end the prudent moderation of the chief priest specially contributes a moderation which may so far restrain seditious impiety that regard for true piety may be permanently established, that is, if the tares are rooted out in such a way that the wheat is not rooted up with them. That would be more easy to accomplish if private reasonings were laid aside and we were all to look to one great objective, that is, the glory of Christ. At present most persons look after their own interests, and so it happens that it is not well with us either in private or public. We lay the blame on one another, though this world-wide cataclysm may be the hand of God inviting all men to correct their lives. If we all flee for refuge to Him, He Himself might easily turn this awful storm in human affairs into a great calm. But upon these matters I have dwelt at too great length to your Excellency, who must have a far more correct view of them than I can possibly have—whose most moderate prudence and most prudent moderation methinks I not only have known from the testimony of men, but also from actual experience.”¹

This detached reformer is careful to let Duke George know that “in this matter I am acting in the interests not of the heretics, but of orthodoxy and statesmanship. We see how widely the contagion has spread. But if we press matters to the extremity of the sword a great many pious people will be involved in the resulting cataclysm: and the result of violence is doubtful. If I indulged in the ‘natural man’—that is, if I hated Lutherans as they hate me, I should urge the princes to severity with all my strength; but Christian charity and considerations of humanity dictate a different course. We must not always consider the deserts of the heretic; the interests of Christendom must be considered too. I agree that we always bind the converted man to better counsels, but a prince has his own rights too. The Donatists were utter heretics, but Augustine pleaded anxiously that they should not be put to death.

“It is no good for me or any one to try to remove the reproach of severity from the Emperor and Ferdinand if in the same dispatch I suffer myself to be provoked to severity by the wickedness of heretics. The aggressor deserves severity in this

¹ Erasmus to the Elector Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, March 18, 1528, *Epist.*, DCCCCXLV, 1068 A.

case. I have felt none of the severity of the war, although if it were possible I should wish that Christian concord should unite the hearts of the monks, and I have often urged the Emperor to this effect. If this may not be, I shall not cease to pray that the Emperor and Ferdinand may conquer with the least possible expenditure of blood. I long for a happier result than this prelude seems to promise. Certainly the rash wickedness of many has been a dreadful injury to the peace of the Church. If the bishops and priests—nay if we all turned with all our heart to the Lord, understanding that this is the hand of God, He would remove His anger from us, and His mercy would give a happy end to these disturbances. It is His wish to cure rather than to kill the erring, and carefulness lest severity should create an evil worse than the disease is careful political foresight, not sympathy with heresy.”¹

The outlook, then, is not unhopeful. “Luther is now silent. Melanchthon preaches mildness,” he tells Pirkheimer.² “The Lutheran fever is at present mitigating in fury,” he informs Gattinara.³ He affirms that he was the first who, almost single-handed, opposed Luther, and that he had proved a true prophet in predicting that the drama which the world had greeted with such warm applause would have a sad termination. In one of his *Apologies* he maintains of his earlier writings that “neither Lutherans nor anti-Lutherans could clearly show him to have called in question any single dogma of the Church.” Numbers had tried hard to do so, yet they had merely succeeded in bringing forward affinities, congruities, grounds of scandal and suspicion, and not a few big fibs.⁴ Indeed, “some theologians, in their hatred of Luther, condemn good and pious sayings which do not emanate from him at all, but from Christ and the Apostles. Thus, owing to their malice and stupidity, many remain in the party adverse to the Church who would otherwise have forsaken it, and many join it who would otherwise have kept aloof.” The invective employed is harming not Luther, but the Church, but even such invective will not induce him to embrace the cause of the reformer.

He tells Longland that he has received by Quirius his two letters. According to his advice he follows the example of St. Augustine in revising his writings. He defends his *Colloquies*

¹ Erasmus to Duke George of Saxony, March 24, 1528, *Epist.*, DCCCCLIII, 1073 A.

² Erasmus to Pirkheimer, April 13, 1528, Le Clerc.

³ Erasmus to Gattinara, July 27, 1528, Le Clerc.

⁴ Erasmus to Christoph von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg, Aug. 26, 1528. *Epist.*, 3, p. 1095 *et seq.*

and other works at some length, and exposes the malevolence and ill-faith of the monks. The Dominicans and the Franciscans have been more bitter of late, and are proceeding to exercise their tyranny on an innocent man for saying that the expense laid out on a monastery had better been bestowed on the poor ; and on two others for merely eating flesh in Lent. He thinks it would be conducive to the concord of the Church if the immense diversity of rubrics, vestments, and rites were done away with, and monks were brought more completely under the authority of the bishops. He professes his adherence to the Catholic Church against the Lutherans. His correspondent's friend, Aldridge, has undertaken much labour on his account in collating manuscripts, and he begs the bishop will repay him.¹

Erasmus still pleaded for reform, and his dislike of Luther did not make him close his eyes to the good aspects of the reformation. He owned that on several points the Lutheran doctrines were excellent, and that he was ready to conform himself to them when they were in agreement with the Gospel. This was a generous admission to make in 1528.² As for heresies the axe and the fire could not end them.³ Such admissions did not make him loved by either side. That "all Germany detested him," he tells Pistorius.⁴ Vainly he published replies and apologies against the Spanish monks, against Beda, against Gerard of Nimeguen, and against Eppendorf. The orthodox party quoted the *Paraphrases* or the *Colloquies*. The fire of criticism once more became so fierce that he told the Prince of Carpi that his babbling pen had sometimes made him outrun discretion, and that had he foreseen the turn of events he would have safeguarded some of his affirmations.⁵ On the other hand Luther assailed him as an Epicurean, a viper, an atheist. It seemed henceforth allowable to insult, Erasmus complains to Fonseca, one formerly regarded as the star of Germany.⁶

To Louis Ber he confesses, "With thoughts of this kind I easily shake off the weaknesses of the flesh, which attack me harmlessly sometimes, with the result that I can better understand what I hear, that Arius, Tertullian, Wyclif, and some others have separated from the communion of the Christian

¹ Sept. 1, 1528, *Epist.*, p. 1099.

² Erasmus to J. Bishop, Sept. 1, 1528, Le Clerc.

³ Erasmus to Gattinara, March 30, 1527, Helfferich.

⁴ Erasmus to Pistorius, Feb. 5, 1528, Horawitz.

⁵ Erasmus to the Prince of Carpi, Feb. 1, 1529, Von der Hardt.

⁶ Erasmus to Fonseca, March 28, 1529, Le Clerc.

flock owing to the envy of the clergy and the wickedness of some monks, and have put forth their private grievance to the harm of the Church. I had rather lay down life and fame than descend to such wickedness—a feeling, I think, which will not easily slip into heresy. Would that I were allowed at the cost of my life to heal these evils of the Church! For, as I candidly answered to some who libellously quoted my writings under the pretence of zeal, the desire of revenge has not driven me to this, but the zeal for piety against eager wickedness. It is one thing to see heresy: it is another to wipe off the reproach of heresy. One may be silent against other forms of abuse, but not in the charge of impiety; if you have a conscience free from guilt, St. Paul orders you to make confession with the mouth unto salvation. But it is a kind of denying not to have a tongue against opposing heresy.

“And it is clear how frivolous are the causes why these men began to attack me. I introduced the classics and cultured literature to the great advantage of theology, which they now pretend to be on the side of, although for forty years they have left no stone unturned to drive them out and crush them in the bud. . . . I never dreamed of abolishing Mass. Concerning the Eucharist, I see no end to discussion; yet I cannot be and never shall be persuaded that Christ, who is the Truth, who is Love, should have suffered His beloved spouse, the Church, to cling so long to hateful error, as to worship wheaten bread instead of Himself. Concerning the consecrating words, I confess I have often longed to be more fully enlightened. But in scruples of this kind I easily agree with the judgment of the Church Catholic. The dogma that *any one* has the power of consecrating, absolving, and ordaining, I have always regarded as clearly absurd. I have always kept clear of sects and parties, nor have I up till now ever attached myself to any faction, although many causes impelled me thither, nor have I ever gathered any disciples, but handed over to Christ whomsoever I had. For how can we cure the disease with what caused the disease? Each one pulls his own rope; let us rather pull the same rope—to wit, Christ’s. It is not proper for any one to withdraw from the holy dogmas of the Church because of the wicked behaviour of men; but it is the part of Christian prudence to cut out the root and source of these evils, so that they may never have another chance of coming to life. My private misfortune I bear with equanimity because I know it will not be long-lived. For now I feel and know that my last hour is nigh; but I cannot bear calmly the utter ruin of the

Church. If this storm crushes only those who have given cause for punishment it would be endurable. But how many pious priests, holy monks, and unstained virgins are treated in unworthy ways? And if we look at these beginnings, we cannot but expect worse things to follow unless the goodness of a kindly Providence thinks fit to avert them, which I trust will be our salvation if with sincere hearts we take refuge therein.”¹

To Christopher of Utenheim he explains that “there are various degrees of error and heresy; there is a great difference between the person who has been misled by argument and him who maintains impious dogma with wicked obstinacy. Again, there is a difference between the simple dissentient and the man who gathers a heretical party to disturb the public peace. It is a new precedent that a man should be burned merely for error—and I know no previous examples. And yet I would approve the devout mind of the French, if it were as great in spiritual judgment as it is biased towards superstition. Certainly up to this they have shown themselves obedient to the Roman pontiff. They deserve good rulers: for they obey whatever kind they get, and it is better to make mistakes in this direction than to indulge in boundless licence, as we see happen in some German states in which the Pope is Antichrist, the cardinals tools of the Antichrist, the bishops worms, the priests swine, the monasteries tabernacles of Satan, the kings tyrants, the governance of affairs in the hands of evangelical people, more ready to fight than dispute. So much I wrote to Berquin, who is happy, I trust, in departing with a good conscience. To be condemned, hanged, cut to pieces, burned, beheaded—is the common lot of saint and sinner alike. To condemn, to cut to pieces, to crucify, to burn, to behead, are the normal use of pirates, as well as legitimate judges. Men’s judgments are bewildering. Happy is he who is absolved of God.”²

In 1529 Erasmus published an edition of Seneca’s works. In his *Paraphrases* and other works he had outlined a theory of progress. Did he dwell on that splendid prophecy Seneca gives in his *Natural Questions*? The editor’s tone is not sympathetic, and it may well be that the evolution theory which the moralist sketched failed to attract Erasmus. The Latin author enables us to connect the names of Erasmus and Calvin, for the first literary work the French thinker gave to the world

¹ Erasmus to Louis Ber, April 1, 1529, *Epist.*, MXXXV, 1179 D.

² Erasmus’s letter to Christopher of Utenheim, July 1, 1529, *Epist.*, MLX, 1210 C.

was his commentary on the *De Clementia*. But Calvin, unlike Erasmus, is an Austinian.

The cosmopolitan scholar found a refuge in his literary work from the maledictions Pierre le Couturier and Beda poured on him so lavishly. Pierre le Cornu cried out in Paris, "Thou shalt tread down the lion and the dragon, the lion Luther and the dragon Erasmus."¹

The process of treading down Luther, if not Erasmus, was undertaken at the Diet of Spires, 1529. In his brief of October 1528, Clement VII had requested the Emperor to provide a remedy for the troubled condition of Germany. On his way to the Diet the Bishop of Constance had met Erasmus, and from the conversation the latter expected nothing but war and violence. Since the meeting of three years ago the orthodox party had been gaining ground. Among the new supporters was Duke Henry of Mecklenburg, and the Elector Palatine was inclined to agree with him. The Roman Catholic body was solid: the Protestant was divided.²

Charles V, through his commissioners, declared that he abolished "by his Imperial and absolute authority" the Spire recess of 1526, which, he said, had been the cause of "much ill-counsel and misunderstanding." This was the clause on which the Lutherans relied when they founded their territorial churches. The acquiescence of the majority of the Diet in this action left the reforming side wholly without the authority of the law for what they had done. It declared that those states of the Empire that had hitherto executed the Worms decree should continue to do so; that in other states no further innovations should be made on pain of the Imperial ban. It forbade any prince or city to deprive any priest or religious corporation of authority or revenue, thus destroying any possibility of creating or keeping up Lutheran churches. It declared that sects denying the Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Christ—this was specially aimed at the Zwinglians—should not be tolerated, and that the Anabaptists were everywhere to be suppressed; and finally it provided for a censorship of books. No prince should take the subjects of another under his protection. In effect, the result was that the Roman Catholics received toleration in the Lutheran districts, while the Lutherans received no toleration in Roman Catholic

¹ Erasmus's letter to J. Botzheim, Aug. 13, 1529.

² On Melancthon's attitude cf. *Corp. Reform.*, I, 1038-41, 1046, 1051, 1068-9, 1075; 2, 563. Cf. Luther's *Briefe*, 3, 423, 435, 448, 454 ff., 465; cf. also Ranke, 3, 103; *Corp. Reform.*, 13, 906; 25, 242, 595.

districts. No one, for example, was to be prevented from hearing Mass.

The Lutheran princes and cities, especially the southern towns, were intensely alarmed by this ordinance. They did not relish the prospect of the restoration of the mediæval ecclesiastical rule, and with it the right of the bishop to deal with the preachers in his diocese. They commissioned Georg Vogler, the Chancellor of the Margrave of Brandenburg, to draw up a formal reply. This document, presented to the Diet on April 19, 1529, is the Protest from which the popular name of the reforming party is derived. The legal argument is that the unanimous decision of the Diet of 1526 cannot be rescinded by the vote of the majority at another Diet. The second reason is that the recess contains matters that "concern the glory of God and the welfare and salvation of the souls of every one of us." "In matters concerning the honour of God, the welfare and salvation of our souls, each stands for himself and must give account before God. Therefore in this sphere no one can make it another's duty to do or decide less or more." When forced to make their choice between obedience to the Emperor and obedience to God, they were obliged to choose the latter. They appealed, from the wrongs done to them at the Diet, to the Emperor, to the next free General Council of Christendom, or to an ecclesiastical congress of the German nation. The Lutherans refused to listen to any proposals for universal tolerance: their position was *Cujus regio, ejus religio*. The Protest was signed by the Elector John of Saxony, the Margrave Joachim of Brandenburg, Dukes Ernest and Francis of Brunswick-Lüneburg, Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt, and the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, the political genius of the evangelical princes. The fourteen cities which adhered were Strassburg, Nürnberg, Ulm, Constance, Lindau, Memmingen, Kempten, Nördlingen, Heilbronn, Reutlingen, Isny, St. Gallen, Weissenburg, and Windsheim. At the Diet of Worms, a monk had asserted the rights of conscience. At the Diet of Spire, for the first time in history, a body of men had also asserted the rights of conscience. The second assertion had behind it more than one-third the power and wealth of Germany. A minority of German states held the position that when the majority oppressed them they could shelter themselves behind the laws of the Empire. The principle was not a new one, but it was one that ultimately meant the use of force.¹

¹ Cf. Hassenkamp, *Hessische Kirchengesch.*, I, 215; Köstlin-Kawerau, I, 283, 352, 600; 2, 249, 400-1, 647 ff.; H. Preuss, *Die Vorstellungen vom*

Erasmus discerns this, the employment of brute strength, when he tells Tunstall on January 31, 1530, that to all appearance the long war of words and writings will terminate in blows. But for his soul's health he would rather be in the camp from which he fled; but Heaven forbid, that, for the little life remaining to an old man with a stone in his bladder, which is certain death, he should desert the unity of the Church. As to what ministers may decree concerning his writings, that is their affair. If the rulers of the Church were men like Augustine, Erasmus would agree with them excellently; but if Augustine himself were to write now what he has written, or what the age requires, he would be as badly thought of as Erasmus. It is true what Tunstall says, that fire is not put out by fire; but it is not right to endure a charge of impiety. He can adduce hundreds of passages, both in Augustine and St. Paul, which would now be denounced as heresies. Monks and schoolmen are deceived if they think this is the way to secure the peace of the Church. They throw oil upon the flames. He does not congratulate More, although he does not grieve for him. England he does congratulate, and himself not a little. He has translated three homilies of Chrysostom from a manuscript by Tunstall's advice, which he regretted, as he saw nothing there of Chrysostom. This is not the only work on which he is engaged. He speaks of other works in preparation. He thinks the faults of Æcolampadius are more from hurry than want of skill. He gives his opinion on the real presence, with some remarks upon Origen. He has answered the objection of the Bishop of Lincoln respecting his *Colloquies*, and denies any intention of turning the fasts and ceremonies of the Church into ridicule. He complains that the Observants had employed a young member of their Order to insult him. If he could get rid of the stone he could easily despise all other troubles. He trusts that the sects will be kept in order by the Emperor. He sends his compliments to the Chancellor (More) and thanks him for his present.¹

The Imperial policy for the moment was wise and moderate. Perhaps the promise of the first days of the Renaissance might be at last fulfilled, the age of gold realized.² The hope, however, disappeared as the scholar perceived that civil war had not

Antichrist, 115; W. Walther, *Luther's Waffen*, 158, 170; and his *Für Luther*, 246 ff., 278 ff.; Wappler, *Inquisition und Ketzerprozesse*, 134; Winckelmann, *Der Schmalkaldische Bund*, 91.

¹ Erasmus's letter to Tunstall, Jan. 31, 1530, *Epist.*, p. 1092. I use Dr. Brewer's translation.

² Cholerus's letter to Erasmus, Nov. 12, 1530.

ceased. On March 7, 1530, Erasmus wrote to Cardinal Sadoletto, the Melanchthon of Romanism: "I feel as if I had to do with a mad and wretched riot of country people, or as if I were not the first who attacked this seditious anarchy, in moderate terms, I admit, but more sensibly and prudently for the keeping of the peace of the Church than these men who think to put the fire out by blows and threats and cruelty. I refrain from names, for in these there are some united to me by a deeper than the earthly tie, whom nevertheless I perceive to have accomplished nothing but to tie up themselves and their communities in tighter bonds, and they do so more every day. May God grant, Your Highness, that I turn out a false prophet. But yet if you should see, what I hate, furious tumults arising over the earth, not so much terrible to Germany as harmful to the Church, remember that this was predicted by Erasmus. The first mistake was to neglect Luther with his propositions on Indulgence. The second is not to take action through the monks who are hateful almost to the whole world, not with helpless abuse to the common people, nor with burning of men and books, but with books that would have a circulation among the learned. Finally it is desirable to be politic and endure them for a while, as we have endured the Bohemians and the Jews. Time itself often supplies a remedy to incurable evils. Constantly preaching those things, I have been so misunderstood that I am represented as 'a supporter of heretics.' The diplomatist imagined he was doing something splendid, who, wherever Charles went, filled the whole place with the fire and smoke of books, threatening everybody, and it was not his fault that he was prevented from persecuting, and Erasmus would have been destroyed, if the fool had got the ear of any kings. The other, who, although not personally known to me, was known by reputation as a scholar, and dear on that account, declaimed everywhere in Rome against Erasmus as a child, unlearned and with no sense. After I had argued with him in courteous and respectful terms, he answered in a regular and careful treatise, which he sent to me before it was in a finished state. From this I easily saw that the man had not read my works, but was writing what he had heard at second hand, and that he was not writing of his own initiative at all. When this work came to me at Paris, finished, with some additions, I wrote civilly to the author, being very anxious, as far as the nature of the case permitted, that he should suppress nothing, even expressions of just disapproval, which would do his reputation harm, assuring him that the friendliness

that he had expressed towards me in the end of the book was shared by me also.”¹

The kinship in soul the scholar felt for the Melanchthon of Romanism, he felt more deeply for Melanchthon himself. As Erasmus was the preceptor of Europe, Melanchthon was the preceptor of Germany. Both were humanists to the core. Erasmus felt warmly attracted by the grave courtesy, the irresistible charm of Melanchthon.² Gentleness and sympathy are marked traits in the character of each. At moments when an instant decision was wanted they were apt to fail their followers. Both loved peace and devised means to preserve it. Both hated controversy, for did not the fires of controversy destroy the calmness which the pursuit of truth demanded? As Erasmus was a mediator in learning, Melanchthon was a mediator in theology. The desire—a desire mixed perhaps with pusillanimity—to find the golden mean proved the guiding motive of both men. It is significant that neither Erasmus nor Melanchthon arrived at his theological standpoint by violent struggle. Prudence, moderation, and conservatism were their distinguishing qualities. Both matured early and continued their labours to the very end. Their character—not their will—developed while they were young men. Though they possessed many disciples, they owned no devotees. They were out of touch with the needs of the ordinary man.

Interested as they were in all learning, the main study of Erasmus and Melanchthon lay particularly in the classics. The past fascinated them, and gave them that reverential attitude which on the whole dominated them. Obedience to the powers that be was a sacred duty, incumbent on all. Melanchthon was as devoted to the Emperor as Erasmus to the Pope. Scholasticism repelled both men. Melanchthon, however, was fairer than Erasmus in his estimate of the worth of Aristotle. Curiously enough, both men were as attracted to astrology as Roger Bacon. They edited books, for they were firmly persuaded that all hope of fruitful knowledge lay in a return to the sources. The *Novum Instrumentum* of Erasmus may be set alongside the Lutheran translation of the Bible, which owed so much to the genius of Melanchthon. Width of reading and breadth of learning characterized the two scholars. Their versatility deprived them of the capacity

¹ Erasmus's letter to Cardinal Giacomo Sadoletto, March 7, 1530, *Epist.*, *MXCIV*, 1271 F.

² Erasmus's letter to J. Pflug, Aug. 20, 1531, col. 1412; Kawerau, *Versuche*, 31.

of leadership, for how could they think that their side, and their side alone, was the absolutely right one? Great as was their industry, unrivalled as was their capacity for taking pains, their industry and their capacity did not equal in their immediate practical effect the results achieved by the narrowness and the intensity of Luther. The love of compromise was natural to Erasmus and Melanchthon: it was sometimes a way to evade the difficulties of the day. The Confession of Augsburg attests how far the latter was willing to go in his attempts to conciliate Rome. Both were essentially lay-minded, for Erasmus by papal permission resigned his Orders. Their influence over the university education of Europe is incalculable: both prepared the means for the advance in secular knowledge. The professor's chair, the study, formed the centre of their rule.

The ideal of Erasmus and Melanchthon was a far-reaching system, a method, embracing all that was best in the Renaissance and the Reformation. Reason was, in their opinion, as necessary as faith to the member of the Catholic Church: ancient philosophy and Christian creed were both required. Revelation required natural reason and natural reason required revelation. Both could separate the unimportant from the important, the unessential from the essential—qualities more uncommon than people suppose. The ideals of the Middle Ages had become obsolete and impossible: it was the task of Erasmus and Melanchthon to render new ideals possible, to prevent their becoming utterly chaotic. It is difficult to overrate the efforts of Melanchthon in preventing the direst confusion on the side of Reform. He resisted the logical precision of Carlstadt just as he resisted the countless paradoxes of Brenz. He opposed the exaggerations of Flacius just as fervently as he opposed the assertions of Amsdorf, that *inter alia* good works furnished a positive hindrance to salvation. Balance was as much his characteristic as it was that of Erasmus. Knowledge was an ennobling, a refining influence, as it led men to Him who is its true source. For the two humanists Christ formed the sum and substance of true theology. To both there was a growth in revelation, because the Old Testament prepared the way for the grander revelation of the New.

The differences between Erasmus and Melanchthon are no less unmistakable than the resemblances. Though both shrank from active life, it is clear that the energy of Luther forced Melanchthon to forsake the life of a recluse. What

the association of Keble, Pusey and Newman meant to the Oxford Movement, the association of Luther and Melanchthon meant to the German Movement. Melanchthon cared more for St. Austin than Erasmus, which involves the conclusion that he realized the power of sin more deeply. On the other hand, Erasmus was more convinced of the moral freedom of man, more certain that toleration was the right principle, than his friend.

The uneasiness of Erasmus and Melanchthon at the time in which their lot was cast is obvious. They realized that they, like hapless Prometheus, had been bound fast by Fate. The growing confusion, the endless disputation, the religious upheaval, and the depressing feeling that learning was thrust into the background—all these factors made both welcome the end when it came. Melanchthon looked forward to that light “where God is all in all and where there is no more sophistry, no more misrepresentation.”¹

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 9, 822.

CHAPTER X

CREED AND COUNCIL

THE Lutherans could not allow matters to remain in the position in which they had been left in 1529. It behoved them to put their house in order, and they, therefore, set about the task of drawing up a formal statement of their belief to be presented at the Diet of Augsburg, 1530. The Theses, Disputations, and Tracts of Luther obviously dealt with the particular points at issue, but from the consideration of a detail in doctrine to a survey of the whole field proved a long step to take. His ninety-five Theses at Wittenberg, 1517, against the history and practice of Indulgences, his Disputations at Heidelberg, 1518, and at Leipzig, 1519, were all his own. In composing a creed for his communion he received invaluable assistance from the highly capable brain of Philip Melanchthon. Luther reached the common people, Melanchthon the scholars. Luther was forceful and rough, his friend timid and mild. Luther was audacious and prompt, Melanchthon irresolute and inclined to compromise. The scholar's pen supplemented the prophet's voice to such a degree that their weakness was halved and their strength doubled. St. Bernard called Abelard Goliath, and Arnold of Brescia his armour-bearer. Luther was the new Goliath, and Melanchthon was his armour-bearer. The latter had, indeed, in 1521 felt the need of a doctrinal system which he had embodied in his *Loci Communes*, the first statement of Lutheran doctrine. It is amazing to think that its author was not twenty-four, and that Calvin was not twenty-seven when his *Christian Institutes* appeared. The future of Protestantism depended on political union, and this in turn depended on dogmatic union. Luther had written a popular exposition of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in 1518. Catechisms had been published by such reformers as Urbanus Rhegius, Loncier, Melanchthon, Brenz, and Lachmann between 1520 and 1523. The Waldensian and Bohemian reformers had

used the manuals of the Middle Ages in their books, and in 1523 they presented a Latin copy of one of these to Luther. His own *Smaller Catechism*, or *Enchiridion*, 1529, at once attained a pre-eminence which enabled it to outdistance all rivals, including even the *Larger Catechism* of the same year.¹ In homely question and answer the *Enchiridion* expounds the Decalogue, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar.

In 1529 a conference was held by the Reformers in which Luther and Melanchthon represented the German, and Zwingli and Œcolampadius the Swiss. The outcome was the Fifteen Articles of the Marburg Conference, 1529.² Articles I to XIV on the Trinity, Incarnation, life of Christ, original sin (on which the harmony was partial), redemption, justification by faith, the work of the Holy Spirit by Word and Sacraments, Baptism, good works the fruit of faith, confession and absolution, civil authority, tradition, the necessity of infant baptism, were agreed to without difficulty. Article XV was left incomplete, through disagreement on the meaning of the words *Hoc est meum corpus*, in the form of three propositions: (1) The Eucharist ought to be received in both kinds; (2) the Sacrifice of the Mass is inadmissible; (3) the Sacrament of the Altar is a sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, and the partaking of it is salutary. It was a happier omen for the future of toleration that the words were added: "And, although we are not at this time agreed as to whether the true Body and Blood of Christ are physically present in the bread and wine, we recommend that each party manifest Christian love to the other, so far as the conscience of every one shall permit, and that both parties entreat Almighty God to confirm us by His Spirit in the right doctrine. Amen."

A fortnight later the Marburg Articles were revised and enlarged, and presented as the Seventeen Articles of Schwabach³ at a gathering of Lutheran princes and representatives in that

¹ On their unscientific character cf. Calvin, *Opera*, III, p. x.

² *Corp. Reform.*, I, 1064 ff., 1067, 1071, 1077 ff., 1095 ff., 1098 ff., 1102 ff., 1108; *Ph. Melancthonis epistolæ, etc., quæ in Corp. Reform. desiderantur*, disp., Bindseil (1874), 517; Zwingli, *Op.*, 8, 288, 312 ff., 323, 336 ff., 340, 351, 354, 357 f., 363 f.; Luther's *Briefe*, 6, 102 ff.; 3, 312, 473, 491, 501, 511 ff.; 4, 28 f.; *Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), 165; Neudecker, *Urkundenbuch*, 93-5; Baum, *Capito und Butzer*, 460 f., 462 f.; Keim, *Schwabach Reformationsgesch.*, 127, 290 ff.; Riederer, 2, 110 ff., 121; Usteri, *Stud. und Krit.* (1883), 400 ff.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 24, 322 ff.; *Corp. Reform.*, I, 26; 26, 138; Riederer, I, 48 ff., 54 f., 513. Cf. the clear account in Curtis, *History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith*, 141, 478.

town. They were followed by the supplementary Articles, March 1530, drawn up at Torgau by Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, and Bugenhagen, for the Elector John of Saxony, with a view to presentation in the interests of Catholic reunion at the forthcoming Diet at Augsburg. The Articles of Schwabach are pacific in tone and positive in doctrine. The Articles of Torgau are controversial in tone, dealing with clerical marriage, communion in both kinds, the Mass, confession, invocation of saints, the superiority of faith to works, and the like. These two sets of Articles form the basis of the first and second portions of the great Augsburg Confession of 1530, which remains the classical statement of the doctrine of the German Reformation.¹

Luther was under ban, and therefore could not be present at the Diet. On Melanchthon devolved the responsibility of composing the Augsburg Confession. It was, however, based on the Articles of Schwabach and Torgau, and these were essentially Lutheran in thought and expression. The two men were in constant correspondence, and were intimate friends. Consequently the understanding between them was remarkably complete. When Luther saw the draft for revision he informed the Elector: "It pleases me well, and I know of nothing by which I could better it or change it, nor would it be becoming, for I cannot move so softly and gently." Melanchthon was anxious for peace: hence Luther did not quite like the leniency or silence of the Confession on the subjects of purgatory, saint-worship, and the papal Antichrist, a matter on which he held extremely pronounced views.

The twenty-one articles of its first part state the main doctrines held by the Lutherans: (1) In common with Roman Catholics, the doctrine of the Catholic creeds; (2) in common with the Augustinians, against Pelagianism and Donatism; (3) in opposition to Romanists, on justification by faith, the exclusive mediatorship of Christ, Church, ministry, and rites;

¹ Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3⁴, 684 ff., Droysen, 2b, 382; Knaake, *Luther's Anteil an der Augsburgischen Confession*, 1-36; Niemeyer, *Melanchthon im Jahre der Augsburgischen Confession*, 22; Pastor, *Reunions.*, 20; Schmidt, *Melanchthon*, 186 ff., 234; Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 259 ff.; Förstemann, *Urkundenbuch*, 1, 143 f., 152, 161, 166 f., 233, 267, 274 ff.; Birck, 1, 443, 446 f.; Köstlin, 2, 246, 654; Maurenbrecher, 311; Ranke, 3, 207 ff.; Schirrmacher, 67 ff., 87 ff., 306, 394. On Luther's attitude cf. his *Briefe*, 3, 564 f., 568; 4, 17, 27, 49, 51-5, 58, 61-2, 69-71, 82, 108, 121, 175; 5, 315 ff., 357. On Melanchthon's attitude cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 33, 39 ff., 45, 47, 57-60, 87 f., 89 f., 118-9, 122, 333, 340-5, 602. On his attitude in 1530 and 1540 cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 62, 88, 92, 96, 101, 103, 108, 112, 117, 125, 141, 388, 430, 488, 494, 498, 504, 547; 3, 112-9, 1132, 1137, 1143, 1147, 1151, 1158, 1164, 1169, 1193-5, 1213, 1224, 1233, 1239-40; 4, 737, 985; 10, 197; 25, 11; 26, 346 ff., 537 ff., 321 ff.

and (4) in distinction from Zwinglians and Anabaptists (the former are not named), upon the meaning and administration of the sacraments, on confession, and on the millennium. The seven articles of the second part condemn the chief Roman abuses: (1) the withholding of the Cup; (2) compulsory celibacy of the clergy; (3) the Mass a sacrifice; (4) compulsory confession; (5) festivals and fasts; (6) monastic vows; (7) secular domination by bishops, to the spiritual disadvantage and corruption of the Church.

In part one Article VII teaches that the Church "is the congregation of the saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught, and the Sacraments rightly administered: unto the true unity of the Church it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacrament: nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by men should be alike everywhere; as St. Paul saith: 'There is one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.' " The XIIth Article of the Schwabach Articles of 1529 explains the nature of the Church. There is "no doubt that there is and ever will be on earth a holy Christian Church until the end of the world, as Christ saith in Matthew xxviii. 20. . . . This Church is nothing else than the believers in Christ, who hold, believe, and teach the foregoing articles and provisions (i.e. of the Schwabach Confession), and who, for this reason, are persecuted and tormented in this world. For where the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments duly administered, there is the holy Christian Church, bound by no laws and outward ritual to place or time, people or ceremonies."¹ According to the Schwabach Visitation Convention of 1528 "the power of the Churches only extends to the choosing of ministers and the enforcement of the Christian ban" and the care of the poor: "all other power belongs either to Christ in heaven or to the secular authorities on earth."²

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 30, p. 3, p. 86 ff.; Erl. ed., 24², p. 337 ff.; *Corp. Reform.*, 26, p. 151 ff.

² On the Visitation of 1528 cf. Burkhardt, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kirchen- und Schulvisitationen von 1524 bis 1545*, 4 ff., 10 ff., 16, 20 f., 39 ff., 44-6, 48 ff., 120-1, 127, 138, 209 ff.; Döllinger, *Luther, eine Skizze*, 50; Förstemann, *Neue Mittheilungen des thüringisch-sächsischen Geschichts-vereins*, 80, and his *Urkundenbuch*, I, 19 f., 380; K. Holl, *Luther und das landesherrliche Kirchenregiment*, 59; Heppe, *Kirchen-gesch. v. Hessen*, I, 148 ff.; Kolde, *Friedrich der Weise*, 71 ff.; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 2, 29 ff., and his *Luther's Theologie*, 2, 558 f.; Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 22 ff., 42, 47, 275, 440, 552; Krumhaar, *Grafsch. Mansfield*, 251; Lingke, *Reisegeschichte Luther's*, 172 ff., 186 ff.; Meurer, *R. Hausmann*, 296 ff.; K. Müller, *Kirche, Gemeinde und Obrigkeit nach Luther*, 63, 71 ff., 74 ff.; N. Paulus, *Hexenwahn und Hexenprozess*, 32; E. Richter, *Gesch. der evangel. Kirchenverfassung in*

The defence of the Augsburg Confession lays down that "the Church is not only a commonwealth of outer things and rites like other institutions, but is also a society of hearts in faith and the Holy Ghost. Still, she has visible signs by which she may be recognized, viz. the pure doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments in agreement with Christ's Gospel."¹ According to the Schmalkald Articles of 1537 to 1538 "the Churches must have the power to call, choose, and ordain the ministers of the Church, and such power is, in fact, bestowed on the Church by God. . . . The words of Peter, 'Ye are a royal priesthood,' refer only to the true Church, which, since she alone has the priesthood, must also have the power to choose and ordain ministers."²

Article X of the Augsburg Confession, of the Lord's Supper, affirms that "the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper"; but there is no explanation furnished of the manner in which they are related to the elements, a silence illustrating the desire of the reformers not to make the breach in the unity of the Church irreparable. The text of this article is: "On the Lord's Supper we teach that the Body and the Blood of Christ are truly present (*vere adsint*), and are given to those who eat them (*distribuantur escentibus*), in the Lord's Supper; and we condemn the contrary doctrine (*secus docentes*)." In 1540 Melancthon modified it in important respects, suppressing the words *vere adsint* and the condemnation of contrary doctrines, and replacing the word *distribuantur* by the words *vere exhibeantur*. It then read: "On the Lord's Supper we teach that, with the bread and the wine are truly offered (*vere exhibeantur*) the Body and the Blood of Christ to those who eat them in the Lord's Supper."³

Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession, of Ecclesiastical Orders, teaches "that no man should publicly in the Church teach or administer the Sacraments, except he be duly called." Of course the Church has the command of God to appoint preachers.⁴

Deutschland, 64; A. L. Richter, *Die evangel. Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrh.*, 1, 40 ff., 56 ff., 77 ff.; 2, 181, 192 ff., 226 ff.; Rommel, *Philipp der Grossmuthige*, 1, 156; 2, 116; Ranke, 2, 162; R. Sehling, *Die evangel. Kirchenordnung des 16. Jahrh.*, 1, 142 ff.; Schmidt, *R. Hausmann*, 42 f.; Seidemann, *Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte*, 102 f.; F. Ward, *Darstellung der Ansichten Luthers vom Staat*, 15-7; Winter, *Protokolle der Kirchenvisitation*, 76 ff.

¹ *Apol. confess.*, art. 4.

² *De potestate et iurisdictione episcoporum* (by Melancthon) in *Symbol. Bücher*, p. 341 ff.

³ Melancthon, *Opera*, ed. Bretschneider, XXVI, p. 357, n. 34.

⁴ Art. 14, *Symbol. Bücher*, p. 42.

Article XVI, of Civil Affairs, teaches "that such civil ordinances as are lawful are good works of God; Christians may lawfully bear civil office, sit in judgments, determine matters by the Imperial laws . . . appoint just punishments, engage in just war, act as soldiers, make legal bargains and contracts, hold property, take an oath when the magistrates require it, marry a wife or be given in marriage." It condemns the Anabaptists who forbid Christians to assume these civil offices, also "those who place the perfection of the Gospel, not in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices, inasmuch the Gospel teacheth an everlasting righteousness of the heart. . . . Christians must necessarily obey their magistrates and laws, save only when they command any sin; for then they must rather obey God than men (Acts v. 29)."

Even in this brief summary it is clear that on the whole the document was meant as an *eirenicon*: points of agreement are emphasized and points of difference are slurred over. It was intended as a *via media*, but as such it failed in its purpose. An official refutation of it was issued, which, in turn, was answered by Melanchthon's *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, 1531. These numerous documents with their numerous divisions do not suggest for a moment that their authors had conceived that they had issued truth in a final form. "If aught shall be found wanting," so runs the closing sentence, "in this Confession, we are ready, God willing, to set forth further truth in harmony with the Scriptures."

Luther and Melanchthon differed widely in their conception of the Mass and of the Church. Nevertheless, in spite of certain incidents their friendship stood firm. The brethren of Bohemia admitted only the real presence in the Mass, and Luther did not cut them off from fellowship.¹ In 1525 Brenz had drawn up the Württemberg Confession, called the *Syngramma*, containing contentious views, yet Luther wrote: "The little book pleases me wonderfully well." At the agreement of Wittenberg in 1536 Bucer refused to allow the reprobate to come to the Sacrament, and Luther remarked, "On that we are not willing to dispute."

In the short thesis of 1530, entitled *Ettlich Artikelstück so M. L. erhalten wil, wider die gantze Satans Schüle un alle Pforten der Hellen*, Luther once more sets forth his views on the uselessness of good works, holding that the Christian Church is devoid of the least power to issue an order concerning them. The ministers or bishops are not the whole of the Church, for the

¹ *Apologia*, 1538, Diestelmann, p. 143, n. 1

priesthood is the privilege of all believers. They can exhort the Church to sanction fasts, feasts, prayers, and the like.¹ He concedes larger functions to the State, whose rules bind all. If the sovereign commands a fast-day, all are to obey. Even if the German prince-bishops issue such an order, they are to obey them as princes, not as bishops.²

There was sharp division among the reformers on the degree of toleration to be extended to the Roman Catholics who lived in districts ruled by reformed princes. Exile had been their lot. Charles V interfered on their behalf. His motives were as much political as religious. According to Bucer the Emperor declared that "rather would he renounce his life than tolerate the insubordination of these cities."³ "He understood very well that the intention was to teach him a new religion; however this was not a question of a new religion, but of fists, and the event would show who was the stronger."⁴ The Elector John of Saxony requested the opinion of his theologians on the interference of the Emperor. Luther professed his satisfaction with the expulsion of the Roman Catholics. Melancthon urged the application of corporal penalties, for was it not the duty of the civil power to promulgate and uphold the law of God? ⁵

Zwingli maintained that in case of need the massacre of bishops and priests was a work commended by God.⁶ Martin Bucer drove these principles to a logical conclusion in his *Dialogues*.⁷ Were not, he advocated, the Pope and the bishops damning eternal souls by their idolatry and blasphemy, which the secular authority must root out? Men urge that Christ did not employ force. Why? Is it not obvious, he points out, that as the civil magistrate had not accepted the Gospel, Christ had no force at his command? Any interference with the free course of the Gospel is nothing short of putting the Saviour out of existence—yea, crucifying Him and slaying Him afresh. "The Augsburg Confession must endure as the true and unadulterated Word of God until the great judgment day. The Council could be accepted only on the condition that the

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 30, 2, p. 424; Erl. ed., 31, p. 122.

² To Melancthon, July 21, 1530, *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 129 ff.

³ Keim, p. 181.

⁴ Ströbel, *Miscellaneen*, III, p. 200. Cf. Förstemann, II, p. 710.

⁵ *Corp. Reform.*, IX, p. 77.

⁶ Zwingli, *Opp.*, VII, pp. 174-84.

⁷ *Dialogi oder Gespräch von der Gemeinsame und Kirchenübungen der Christen und was jeder Oberkeit von Ampts wegen aus göttlichen Befehl an denselbigen zu versehen und zu bessern gebüre*, 1535.

Confession be acknowledged as true apart from any conciliar authority." ¹

The reforming party were not the only set of men to consider the functions of the State in effecting religious change. During the negotiations of the Peace of Barcelona, 1529, the Pope and the Emperor had anxiously considered the question of the application of force. Gentle means were at first to be adopted. If, however, they failed, arms were to be used in the suppression of a schism which gave rise to so many insurrections. In the interview of the two potentates at Bologna there was a fresh consideration of the matter.² Cardinal Campeggio advised recourse to arms,³ and the Emperor leant to his opinion.⁴ His wars with Francis I and with the Turks had crippled his finances. Just as the contests and intrigues of Mary of Scotland and Philip II of Spain averted the dangers of the parsimonious policy of Elizabeth, so the contests and intrigues, east and west, averted the dangers of the Protestants.⁵ There were then dangers abroad, and there were dangers at home. A hundred thousand had perished in the Peasants' Revolt just five years before, and there was the probability that those who took the sword to put down heresy might perish by the sword in the attempt to put down sedition. Might not the Turks seize such a golden opportunity for another advance? ⁶ Charles knew he could not reckon on any support from the majority of the Roman Catholic Estates. Only two secular rulers, the Elector Joachim of Brandenburg and Duke George of Saxony, advocated forcible measures.⁷ Among the prelates, men like the Archbishop Albert of Mayence, Archbishop Hermann of Cologne, and Christoph von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg, were in favour of the Lutherans.⁸

¹ Cf. Walch, 46, pp. 1855-6; *Sämmtl. Werke*, 46, pp. 226-9; 48, pp. 342-3, 358; 59, p. 297; 60, p. 82. On Bucer's fear of persecution cf. Keim, *Schwabische Reformationsgeschichte*, 181, 190.

² Bucholtz, III, pp. 444-5.

³ Cf. his letter of June 14, 1530, in Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, 38, and his *Memorial and Summary concerning the policy to be pursued to Germany*, May, 1530, in Maurenbrecher, *Karl V und die deutschen Protestanten*, App. 3-16. Cf. also Lanz, *Staatspapiere*, 48-9.

⁴ Contrast Bucholtz, III, 444 f.; *Aufzeichnungen*, 19; Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, 38, 51; Maurenbrecher, *Karl V und die deutschen Protestanten*: *Anhang* 3-21; Sandoval, 103.

⁵ Cf. the Emperor's dispatch of Sept. 4, 1530, to Micer Mai, his envoy in Rome, in Sandoval's *Historia de la Vida y Hechos del Emperador Carlos V*, p. 103.

⁶ Cf. the Emperor's reply to Campeggio in Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, 51; and Campeggio's proposals in Lanz, *Staatspapiere*, 48-9.

⁷ On the lack of support from the princes cf. Alberi, Series I, 124.

⁸ On the lack of support from the bishops cf. Ehses, *Landgraf Philipp*,

During the negotiations regarding the Augsburg Confession Melanchthon begged Campeggio to tolerate Protestant peculiarities on the ground that they were "insignificant matters which might be allowed or passed over in silence." Here lay a ray of hope for the Emperor. "Some pretext might easily be found for tolerating them, at least until a Council should be summoned."¹ All his efforts after a settlement were subject to the "Proviso of the Gospel" as propounded by Luther and his friends in his letters from the Coburg.² Only concessions not militating against the truth of the Evangel could be made. "Once we have evaded coercion," Luther informed Melanchthon, "and obtained peace, then it will be an easy matter to amend our wiles and slips because God's mercy watches over us."³

"All our concessions," lamented Melanchthon, "are so much hampered with concessions that I apprehend the bishops will suspect we are offering them chaff instead of grain. But what else could we do?"⁴ Take an instance. Brenz, like Melanchthon, wanted to retain the jurisdiction of the bishops. He thinks such jurisdiction will not harm his side, so long as the bishops "agree to our *via media* and conditions." His hope is that they will become new men under the influence of the Gospel, "for always and everywhere we insist upon the proviso of freedom and purity of doctrine. Having this, what reason would you have to grumble at the jurisdiction of the bishops?" It will be of the greatest service in preserving them against the might of the secular power. The main matter is, Brenz concludes, that only thus can we hope to secure "toleration for our doctrine."⁵ Pressure was brought to bear on Luther, and consequently he spoke out against the concessions Melanchthon was offering.⁶ The latter withdrew more and more from the middle position he had taken up. He refused to agree with the Emperor's suggestion that Roman Catholics living in Protestant territories should be left free to practise their religion. The

18; Hassenkamp, I, 270; Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, 417-8; Seidemann *Luther's Grundbesitz*, 477; *Aufzeichnungen*, 19.

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 173. Cf. p. 169.

² Luther's letter to Melanchthon, June 29, 1530, *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 45.

³ Aug. 28, 1530, *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 235; De Wette, IV, 156. Cf. Riffel, II, 422 n.

⁴ Melanchthon's letter to Camerarius, *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 324. Cf. *ibid.*, 3, p. 964.

⁵ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 362.

⁶ Cf. Luther's letter to Melanchthon, July 13 and Aug. 26, 1530; to Jonas, Spalatin, Melanchthon and Agricola, July 27, *Briefwechsel*, 8 pp. 100, 112, 136 and 219.

divines of the Elector of Saxony, together with Melanchthon, in a memorandum to their sovereign maintained that it was not sufficient for ministers to preach against the Mass, but that the prince must also refuse to sanction it, and must forbid it. "Were we only to say that the prince might abstain from forbidding it, and that preachers only were to declaim against it, one could well foresee what (small) effect the doctrine and denunciations of the preachers would have."¹

In the theological sub-committee dealing with the attempts to effect a reconciliation Eck, Wimpina, and Cochläus represented the one side, and Melanchthon, Brenz, and Schnepf the other.² The fundamental matters at issue were the authority of the Church and the Mass, and these were, for a time at any rate, left aside. The articles of the Augsburg Confession were examined in detail, and were found more acceptable to both sides than was believed possible. The sentence of outlawry prevented the attendance of Luther, and in the interests of peace his retreat at the Coburg was a desirable place for him.³ Anxious consideration was bestowed upon the authority of the bishop. Was he to remain a prince? Was he to unite secular and spiritual government? Did not this union lead to the employment of force? The question of the two swords, which bulks so largely in mediæval discussions, once more appeared. On these matters the influence of Melanchthon induced an agreement. He was so afraid of anarchy that he was willing to make generous concessions.⁴ In the Erasmian spirit he contended that "inordinate discussions are very prejudicial to public peace," and he argued against the continuance of the schism. He and Brenz admitted that the prince ought to have no authority in the internal affairs of the Church.⁵ The representatives of the Imperial cities, especially those from Nürnberg, and the princes, especially Philip of

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 307.

² On the negotiations cf. Luther's *Briefe*, 4, 281, 335, 366 f., 369, 372, 380, 382 ff.; 6, 134; Bezold, *Reformationsgeschichte*, 641 ff.; Preger, 72; Maurenbrecher, 335; Ranke, 3, 295.

³ Luther's letter to Melanchthon, Aug. 26, 1530, *De Wette*, IV, p. 147; his letter of Aug. 28, 1530, *De Wette*, IV, 259. Cf. his letter to Spalatin, IV, p. 155; to Justus Jonas, Sept. 20, 1530, *De Wette*, IV, p. 170; cf. also Schirrmacher, pp. 226-9.

⁴ To Matthäus Aber, Aug. 23, *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 302; Schmidt, *Melanchthon*, p. 233.

⁵ Cf. Melanchthon's letter, Aug. 7, 1530, *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 259. Contrast his letter to Philip of Hesse, Sept. 26, *Corp. Reform.*, 1, p. 821. Cf. *ibid.*, 2, pp. 268-70; cf. also the letter of Brenz to Isenmann, Sept. 11, 1530, *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 362.

Hesse, resolutely opposed all attempts to restore episcopal authority. According to Holy Writ the blessing of the peacemaker is that he shall be called the child of God, but Jerome Baumgartner plainly regarded Melanchthon as the child of the devil. The extremists of the party, then as always, interposed formidable obstacles in the way of reconciliation. The Swiss reformers were intriguing with Philip of Hesse. "Our cause would not be so generally detested," complained Melanchthon, "were it not for the baneful influence of the Zwinglians, who not only preach insufferable doctrine, but are hatching seditious plots against the Emperor. They boast that they will make an irruption into the Empire. Their intrigues can only lead to a fearful destruction of the Church, and of all forms of government."¹

The Saxon jurists and Philip of Hesse pressed that not only the present, but also the future, adherents of the Augsburg creed should be included in the treaty, and that the Roman Catholic rulers should permit the ready promulgation of the new doctrines. Anxious that the prospects of an agreement might not come to an end, Luther wrote to the Elector of Saxony, pointing out that "the first of all these demands would never be agreed to by the opposite party. It was not advisable, therefore, to wrangle about it at the risk of upsetting the peace negotiations altogether, especially as it might be passed over without any injury to consciences." They could offer the Gospel to others, and let them accept it at their own risk, as the princes and the towns had done. Besides, "to insist on this stipulation was to lay themselves open to the suspicions of wishing to draw away subjects from the other princes and by this means to direct the whole of the Empire from the Emperor to their own side." On the second point Luther proved equally reasonable. "We ought not," he pleaded,² "to do to others what we should not like others to do to us. Now, as no rulers of this party would like to be forced by neighbouring princes to allow their subjects to continue the observance of the old religion, so it follows that we have no right to compel the rulers of the opposite party to allow their subjects the exercise of the new religion."² The Elector John of Saxony followed this course.

The outcome of the deliberations of the Diet of Augsburg, 1530, was that the Protestants were to be allowed to exist until

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, pp. 95, 103; 4, p. 1008. Cf. *ibid.*, 2, pp. 34 and 193; cf. also Zwingli, *Opp.*, 8, pp. 459, 473, 505.

² De Wette, 4, pp. 369-74; 380-5.

April 15, 1531, and were then to be put down by force. In the meantime they were ordered to make no more innovations in worship and doctrine; they were to refrain from molesting the Romanists within their territories; and they were to aid the Emperor and the Romanist princes in stamping out the partisans of Zwingli and the Anabaptists. This resolution gave rise to a second Protest signed by the Lutheran princes and fourteen cities. Cardinal Campeggio insisted that armed force, and armed force alone, was the only method to be employed with the heretics.¹ The Sacred College agreed with him that this was the only resource.² Charles allowed a strict censorship of the Press. The spiritual and secular authorities were to appoint men to supervise lampoons, caricatures, and the like. More the Emperor was unwilling to execute. He continued his preference for peaceful methods.³ "Force," he admitted to his ambassador in Rome, on September 4, 1530, "would certainly be the most productive of results, but the necessary weapons are not forthcoming."⁴ In other words, he could only reckon on the support of two princes, and the task was too enormous to be undertaken single-handed, especially by one whose heart was more wrapped up in Madrid than in Augsburg.⁵ The irresoluteness of Clement weakened any leaning of Charles in the direction of resolution.

An amusing comedy was played at Augsburg in the presence of the Emperor and his Court, parodying quite neatly the birth and progress of the Renaissance and the Reformation. A man clothed in the robe of a doctor threw on the stage a bundle of sticks, some straight, some crooked, and retired. This was Reuchlin. Another entered, endeavouring to arrange them side by side, but, not succeeding, he gathered them into the shape of a pile, then fled. He was Erasmus. An Augustinian monk came next with a burning chafing-dish, flung the crooked sticks into the fire, and blew into it to make a blaze. He was called Luther. A new man, bearing the Imperial insignia, tried to extinguish the fire with his sword, which naturally kindled the flames all the more. This was the Emperor. Last of all came one with pontifical robe and triple crown. Startled by the blaze he looked about and saw two buckets, the one filled with oil, the other with water. He seized the water first, but emptied in mistake the oil on the fire, which naturally assumed such

¹ Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, 73; Ehses, lxxi.

² Report of F. Gonzaga, Oct. 6, 1530, Gonzaga Archives, Mantua.

³ Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, 51; Ehses, *Rom. Quartalschr.*, XIX, 129 ff.

⁴ Sandoval, *Carlos V*, II, p. 103.

⁵ Laemmer, *Mon. Va* 57-8; Maurenbrecher, *Karl V*, App. 16 ff.

enormous proportions that he fled in dismay. This was Leo X. The picture requires no interpreter.¹ The Court officials endeavoured to find the actors who had taken part in this comedy: they had disappeared the moment the acting ceased.

At the Diet of Augsburg neither Luther nor his rival was present. The former was still under the ban of the Empire. At the Diet of Worms, 1521, Erasmus refused to intervene. In 1526 he refused to intervene when the Diet of Spire met, and once more he stands aside. His health was feeble. Besides, the Emperor had not asked him, and he followed the maxim of Cato, who held that one ought not to go to an assembly to which one was not summoned.² Faithful to this maxim Erasmus did not attend, but many of his friends were present. To them he proffered counsels of moderation to which his correspondence was constantly inviting the attention of all its readers. In favour of toleration, in favour of peace he wrote to Christoph von Stadion,³ the Bishop of Augsburg; the Bishop of Würzburg;⁴ Christopher, the Chancellor of Poland;⁵ the Cardinal of Trent;⁶ Cardinal Campeggio,⁷ and the pontifical legate. To all Erasmus represented that peace was the greatest of benefits, and that they must not despair of seeing it again. Did not the Church emerge from a crisis equally formidable in the time of the Emperor Theodosius, when it was struggling at the same time with the pagans and the Arians?⁸ But it was certainly not by measures of force that they would appease the Divine wrath. Lutheranism had struck its roots too deeply, so deeply that no harsh methods could suppress it. They must pray to God that all the princes and even the Emperor himself would submit to the Pope, and inspire the Pope only to think of the interests of the Catholic Church.⁹

The moderation of Erasmus is all the more wonderful when

¹ In the works of Hutten (Böcking, II) there is a pamphlet of 1524 giving an account of a similar piece played in Paris, *Sculteus Grunbergensis, tragædia*, Parisiis a. 1524 aeta.

² Erasmus's letter to L. Bonfilii, July 9, 1530.

³ Erasmus to Christoph von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg, June 25, 1530, Le Clerc.

⁴ Erasmus to the Bishop of Würzburg, Aug. 11, 1530, Le Clerc.

⁵ Erasmus to the Chancellor of Poland, Sept. 2, 1530, Le Clerc.

⁶ Erasmus to the Cardinal of Trent, Sept. 7, 1530, Le Clerc.

⁷ Erasmus to Cardinal Campeggio, Aug. 18, 1530, Le Clerc. Coelestinus in his *History of the Diet of Augsburg* cites all these letters with some others. He dates the letter to Campeggio, Aug. 10.

⁸ Erasmus to the Bishop of Würzburg, Aug. 11, 1530, Le Clerc; Erasmus to the Cardinal of Trent, Sept. 7, 1530, Le Clerc.

⁹ Erasmus to the Bishop of Würzburg, June 25, 1530, Le Clerc; Erasmus to A. Krzycki, Sept. 1, 1530, Le Clerc.

set alongside the conduct of Luther. The reformer's *Apology* against George of Saxony, in particular, seemed to Erasmus a detestable mass of calumny.¹ In September 1530, no less than six outrageous pamphlets appeared against Erasmus.² His counsels to Cardinal Campeggio were known and published, and in 1531 appeared a pamphlet in German setting forth "the reasons why Erasmus thought it was not right to repress Lutheranism by the sword."³ The rumour ran that the humanist had written to the Emperor advocating a policy of conciliation.⁴ This rumour was not founded on fact, though Charles V probably was aware of the pacific ideas developed in the letter to Cardinal Campeggio. At all events Melanchthon testified to Erasmus his gratitude for the wisdom with which he gave proof and begged him not to desist from such conduct.⁵ Men saw that the author of the defence of free will was not the hardened papist that Luther cursed on every occasion.

Melanchthon in conjunction with Bucer recognized that Clement VII evinced a disposition to make concessions, and in their work on *Counsel* they manifest a conciliatory spirit. Melanchthon was willing to entrust the disciplinary reform to the care of the Pope. Though he refused to accept the principle of clerical celibacy, he accepted monasticism if the vows were not perpetual, and if the monastery became a training school for the priesthood. Fasting is accepted, though it is to be a counsel, not an obligation. Melanchthon regarded the liturgy and worship as matters in themselves indifferent. Luther himself had recognized the necessity of conforming to popular custom and of meddling with extreme care in the regular forms of piety. His Mass carefully preserved many of the old rites. Melanchthon was anxious that the prayers and hymns should be borrowed more directly from the Bible, especially the Psalms. Here Clement VII was in thorough agreement. Had he not ordered Cardinal Quiñones in 1532 to undertake the duty of correction of the missal, and to replace some of the prayers and hymns by Psalms? ⁶ Even in doctrinal questions time had

¹ Erasmus to Duke George of Saxony, June 30, 1530, Le Clerc; Erasmus to Melanchthon, July 7, 1530, Le Clerc.

² Erasmus to the Cardinal of Trent, Sept. 7, 1530, Le Clerc.

³ *Ursach warumb Erasmus von Rotterdam inn einer schrift an den Bepstlichen Legatten und Cardinal Campeium bedenckt, das es nicht gut sein sol das Röm. Kei. Maiestat die Lutherische und andere lere mit dem schwerd dempfe. Ynn siebenzenn Artickel gestellet*, 1531 (Bib. roy., Berlin, Cu. 2350). This pamphlet is a free translation of the letter to Cardinal Campeggio.

⁴ Melanchthon to Luther, July 27, 1530, *Melanchth., Op.*

⁵ Melanchthon to Erasmus, July 27, 1530.

⁶ Friedensburg, p. 21.

softened some of the bitterness excited in 1520. Then Luther had emphasized the doctrine of justification by faith and the free gift of salvation. Behind him stood his conception of human nature, which denied that man was capable of good works, regarding his nature as wholly corrupt, and made grace a mechanical act. The humanist culture and the broad mind of Melanchthon altered his attitude to these questions, and he increasingly felt the need of a synthesis: the dualism of Luther was abhorrent to Melanchthon. In 1520 he heartily agreed with Luther. In the next decade he learnt much. He read Aristotle's *Ethics* and Cicero's *De Officiis* again,¹ and their influence is perceptible in the letter he wrote to the Chancellor of Bavaria, Eck: "You are quite right in thinking that it is in the public interest that Aristotle be preserved, be taught in the schools. . . . Without him, we cannot keep true philosophy, and we have no good method for either teaching or learning."²

Melanchthon could not read Aristotle or Cicero without bestowing thought on the law of nature. Its influence appears in the new edition of his *Loci Communes*, which appeared in 1535, though it was begun in 1533. The humanist lays stress on the worth of the moral law and the existence of natural virtues. The doctrine of the invincibility of sin retires to the background of his mental scheme, and he even allows that there is free will, though in a feeble form. "Virtues and good deeds are pleasing to God."³ This approximation to the Erasmian position was powerfully aided by the restrictive sphere assigned to good works by not only Luther, but also by Sadoletto, Contarini, and Lefèvre d'Étaples. There was an eagerness to get rid of the dualism between grace and liberty, works and faith. On the question of authority it was scarcely possible to expect Luther to manifest how much the relations between Church and State, since 1525, had helped him to realize that the papacy stood out as a protest that there was a spiritual authority as well as a temporal one. Melanchthon, however, informed Camerarius on June 19, 1530, and Campeggio on July 6, that popes and bishops are "necessary institutions."⁴ "If there were no bishops, we should be obliged to create them." Melanchthon agreed that the saints pray for us. Bucer and he suggest as a way out of the difficulty that there should

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 16, 1 ff.

² *Ibid.*, 2, 956.

³ *Corp. Reform.*, 21, especially pp. 297-80 on free will. Cf. p. 313, "De dignitate bonorum operum vel de merito."

⁴ Birck, *Strassburg polit. Korresp.*, 97, 300.

be a return to the traditions of the primitive Church and the suppression of all idolatry. Images might be kept : so might saints' days. There must, however, be no praying to saints, no pilgrimages, no vows to them : in a word, there must be no hint of the *Ora pro nobis* doctrine. The ground taken is that the fathers betray no sign of such practices, and therefore they reject them. This was in complete agreement with the position of Luther, who never adopted the view of the Swiss reformers that the Bible and the Bible alone was the test by which every ceremony stood or fell.¹

The Mass was the all-important matter, and here Melanchthon and Bucer failed to come to an agreement, because the reformers themselves were deeply divided. It was easy to admit that confession was quite permissible, provided men did not teach the remission of sins as a consequence. They spoke vaguely of a real presence : they did not insist on the doctrine of transubstantiation. Melanchthon's plan was, pending the meeting of the Council, to settle preliminary points.² For example, he proposed the reduction in the number of private Masses : they did not exist in the Greek Church. Why should not the Pope allow communion in two kinds ? He had allowed it to the Bohemians with good results. Could not the meaning of the word sacrifice be ascertained ? In any case the form of the Mass can be kept. The hopes of both Melanchthon and Bucer rested on the convocation of a General Council. The book concluded with the optimistic outlook of Melanchthon. "Perhaps," he wrote, "some one will object that we are dreaming of the city of Plato when we speak thus of the purity of the Church ? I do not mean to take away every failure from human affairs : I seek only to soften discord, and these remedies are at least possible, if the Pope and the kings mean to apply them." Had the reformers been actuated by this spirit agreement would have been easy. Such a spirit was, indeed, the primary condition, but it was absent. The Swiss and French reformers would have none of it. In Germany Melanchthon had only secured for his council the signatures of six ministers, and of these one only came from Saxony. Representatives, like Brenz, Jonas, and Pomeranus, did not sign. At Augsburg the *Counsel* gave rise to a fierce discussion, and Luther was

¹ Cf. Luther's *Briefe*, 4, 105 ff., 120, 122 ; *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 193 ff., 230 ff., 233-4.

² On Melanchthon's attitude to the Council cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 611, 655, 667, 772 ff., 726-7, 739, 785, 790, 794, 799 ; 10, 536 ; 11, 233 ; Luther's *Briefe*, 4, 454, 460 ; Seckendorf, 3, 90. Cf. Pallavicino, 3, 13.

begged not to allow Melanchthon to proceed to France in this matter.¹

During the course of these attempts at mediation Luther preserved silence. None knew better than he how much his position depended on an agreement with Francis, and obviously his friend's book strengthened this alliance. Bullinger suspected the duplicity of Francis: he suspected the duplicity of the Papists, and he expressed this suspicion.² Melanchthon winced at this wound, for such indeed it was. On August 28, 1535, he wrote to Du Bellay, "I have received blows in the cause of peace: men denounce me as too broad or too timid."³ To Sturm and to Camerarius he once more unbosomed himself. To the former he wrote in true Erasmian spirit on August 28, 1535, "Would to God that it was reserved for specialists only to speak in these weighty matters! Now on both sides alike, it is democracy, it is mere numbers, it is the tyranny of the ignorant who oblige us to squabble over the merest theological trifles. I am, on account of my consultation, and others with me, in the gravest danger. But in civil strife it is the lot of the moderate to be abused by both sides. . . . At least, my will is suspected by my conscience."⁴

Erasmus confided to Cardinal Campeggio on August 18, 1530, his hopes and his fears: "I do not doubt that the mind of a great king leans to peace, mildness, and tranquillity, but in some way opposed to his intentions war upon war is sprung upon us. How long? How wretchedly is Italy harried! and France! where a new war is springing up. At present things look as if the greatest part of the world would be deluged with blood. And as the chance of all war is doubtful, there is a danger that this tumult may tend to the destruction of the whole Church. Especially when the people are persuaded that this business is authorized by the Pope himself, and that the bishops and abbots are largely responsible. And so I fear that the Emperor himself will not escape danger. (May the gods avert this omen!) I know and hate the impudence of those

¹ Enders, X, No. 2306, Forster to Luther, Sept. 8, 1535: "Magna ac ingens querela hic est extorta super tyrannide Regis Gallie, impedire vilis, quominus D. Philippus ad ipsum proficiscatur."

² Enders, X, No. 2290, Aug. 17, 1535. Cf. *ibid.*, No. 2301, Luther to Justus Jonas: "Nollem . . . Philippum cum illis (i.e. the French envoys) proficisci. Fit suspicio, veros legatos esse in itinere occisos, et per papistas istos cum literis subornatos ad extrahendum Philippi."

³ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 915: "Me largiorem aut timidorem existimant." Cf. p. 916: "Vocor transfuga, desertor. . . . Nec pugnant mecum eruditi, sed tantum indocti mihi succensent."

⁴ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 917; Melanchthon's letter to Sturm.

who join and favour sects. But at present we must consider the peace of the Church, not the deserts of heretics. And we must not despair of the Church. It was formerly disturbed by greater storms under Arcadius and Theodosius. What was the condition of the world then? The same State had Arians, Pagans, and Orthodox. The Donatists raged in Africa and the Circumcelliones, in many places the heresy of the Manichæans flourished, and the infection of Marcionism and the incursions of the barbarians. And yet the Emperor held the reins without bloodshed, and gradually weeded out the heretics. Time itself is sometimes a remedy for obstinate diseases. If the sects were permitted under certain conditions (as the Bohemians are winked at) it would be a serious evil, but better than war. In this state of things I should love to be in Italy, but the fates call me elsewhere. But wherever they call me, it will not be from the counsels of peace. But I know that I have enemies in the Emperor's household."¹

Clement suggested the following eight conditions for the plan Erasmus favoured: The Council should be a free and general one, such as those the Fathers had attended; the members thereof must faithfully promise to submit to its decisions, otherwise it was a waste of time; those unable to attend must send representatives, empowered to act for them; until the end of the deliberations no further innovations were to be introduced. The sittings were to be held at Mantua, Piacenza, or Bologna; in spite of the absence of any prince the Council was to proceed; if any should attempt to hinder the work, the Emperor and the other princes must support the Pope in maintaining its existence; six months after the receipt of answers acquiescing in these conditions the Pope would issue writs to summon the Council, which would then meet in the space of twelve months.² The Elector of Saxony asked the opinion of Luther,³ Melanchthon, Justus Jonas, and Bugenhagen, and they were prompt to point out "if we agree to these preliminary articles, it will be as good as retracting and repudiating our confession and apology, annulling and dishonouring all that we have hitherto thought and done, and, above all, confirming and countenancing the Pope in all his abominations."⁴

This danger stared them in the face and scared them. If

¹ Erasmus's letter to Thomas Campeggio, Aug. 10, 1530, 1303 c.

² Raynald ad a. 1533, Nos. 7-8; Pallavicino, lib. 3, cap. 13.

³ Elses, XCVI ff.; Pastor, *Die kirchlichen Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 88.

⁴ *Sämmtl. Werke*, IV, 14-20.

they attended the Council, under Clement's conditions, their cause was beaten before it was even considered; and if they did not attend it was simple to raise the cry that they were afraid to submit their case to learned scrutiny. It was an awkward dilemma, though not less awkward for the Pope. If he allowed the Council, the tale of financial abuses, sure to be brought forward by the German delegates, was not pleasant hearing. If he did not allow it, it was easy to say that he was the enemy of all reform. Melanchthon was broad-minded enough to seize the difficulties of the two dilemmas, though even he objected to the stipulation that his party should promise beforehand to submit to the decisions of the Council.¹ The question of the ultimate authority always lay within the background. Implicitly in the proposals of Clement lay the idea that the judgment of the Pope was final, and no less implicitly in the proposals of Luther and Melanchthon lay the idea that the Bible was also final.² The nuncio was unable to extract any declaration in favour of the Council from Francis I or Henry VIII.³

In 1530 the Pope ingeniously worked out political objections to the holding of a Council. He was astonished, he informed the Emperor's confessor, Loaysa, who was then in Rome, that the Emperor was not weighing the attitude of Francis, who would as inevitably employ it as a means of stirring up his seditious subjects against him as the King of France had employed the Diet of Augsburg. Moreover, he added, if the rebels were to return to the orthodox faith there must ensue a considerable increase of the Emperor's power, which was already a source of envy to the King; whereas if they persisted in heresy he reckoned that a civil war must break out in Germany.

The considerations the Pope placed before the Emperor were all present to the mind of the French King.⁴ Francis thought fit to assure Melanchthon that he especially approved of his doctrine of justification by faith, of his views on the Sacraments and on the slavery of the human will. It is significant that the mistress of this royal theologian, Anna de Pisselieu, Duchess of Étampes, and his sister, Margaret of Angoulême, were as ardent Protestants as Maria, the sister of Charles V.⁵ Francis I admitted that the French theologians were battling

¹ Ehses, XCVI; Pastor, p. 89 ff.; Hefele-Hergenröther, IX, p. 803.

² Cf. Walch, I6, pp. 2281-2289; Bucholtz, 4, pp. 294-5; Pastor, pp. 88-9.

³ Ehses, CI.

⁴ Heine, pp. 393-4; *State Papers*, VII, 277-8.

⁵ Kawerau, *Agricola*, 99-100.

on behalf of the doctrine of transubstantiation ; but he, Francis, was sole ruler in his own kingdom.¹ He was just as determined as Henry VIII to be supreme in Church and State. Did he not hold the opinion that the Pope held his primacy not by Divine right, but by human investiture ? ² These, however, were the ideas of Francis as a private individual : they were not those held by the King of France. The contest with the house of Austria tended to force him to realize how much the interests of the German reformers coincided with his own. The truth is that the duel between him and Charles V was as implacable as that between Louis XIV and William III. The Peace of Cambrai, 1529, gave Burgundy to France, and also gave Francis his children. This peace, like that of Amiens, was no more than a lull in the duel. It left France still encircled by the territories of her formidable opponent. How could she renounce the Milanese, the one way out of the grip between which she was clamped, as in a vice, between two arms ? Nor was the situation abroad unfavourable. The victory of Mohacz, 1526, had established the Turks in Hungary, and they were again pressing the Austrians.

The foe on the borders was reinforced by the foe within. The German cities and the German princes were forming the League of Schmalkald. Henry VIII was on the eve of his rupture with the Pope, and in self-defence he must ally himself with Francis I against the uncle of his wife. The German Protestants and the English King were both eager for reasons, cogent reasons, of their own to stretch out friendly hands to the French King. Already we notice the beginnings of the policy of Henry IV and of Richelieu, the keynote of which was the support of Catholicism at home, of Protestantism abroad. At the very moment Francis was seeking an alliance with the League of Schmalkald he was persecuting the unfortunate Huguenots in his dominions.³ Just as Cardinal Richelieu aided the German Protestants in his day, so Francis aided them in his. His clear policy was to unite the enemies of Charles V, and to divide the friends. On the one hand he supported the Pope when he was unwilling to fall under the control of the Emperor, on the other he supported the reformers. On the one hand he supported the Catholic princes in his own land and, on the other, the Protestant princes in Germany.

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 2, pp. 1014-8.

² *State Papers*, VII, p. 623.

³ Cf. the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, Herminjard, III, pp. 311-2 ; *Bull. de la Soc. de l'Hist. des Protest. franç.*, I, p. 436.

Luther's Reformation had been faith in life : it was fast becoming force in politics. It had once moved consciences : it was now serving interests. The situation was not unlike that of the early Church when Constantine extended his Imperial protection to it. The union of Church and State was as fraught with far-reaching consequences in the sixteenth as in the fourth century. In each case, as the Church became more worldly, it lost spiritually. The problem remains : Could the Church either in the fourth or the sixteenth century have stood apart ? If she could, would she have survived ? In Luther's day the secularization of ecclesiastical property, the control exercised by the prince over the clergy, stood on a lower level than his early belief in the priesthood of all believers.

In 1530 Francis I sent to Germany a diplomatist and a theologian, Gervais Wain, who was a German by birth.¹ Through his capable ambassador, Guillaume du Bellay, he promised the German confederates help on behalf of German freedom.² Du Bellay was ordered to promote the holding of a Council : only it must be national, not œcumenical.³ He was to influence Germany and England steadily in this direction. It was an argument likely to appeal to one so German as Luther and to one like Henry, who discerned in this standpoint the readiest method of securing his right to marry as he pleased. On February 16, 1531, Melanchthon, at the instigation of the German princes and towns, sued for the support of both Francis and Henry.⁴ The encouragement from Paris was so great that on March 29, 1531, the Schmalkald League was formally concluded. This League shivered the unity of the Empire into a thousand territorial fragments.⁵

The French King so dreaded the holding of a Council that he put forward the plea that the disturbed condition of Europe proved the unsuitableness of the project.⁶ It was not Clement VII, Charles V told his nobles, who was to blame for the postponement of the Council, but the King of France, with whom, in spite of all the dispatches and deputations, they had not been able to arrange the time and the place of meeting. To this procrastination of France Clement, in his letter to Garcia

¹ Rommel, I, p. 289 ; Planck, III, p. 197.

² *Mémoires de G. du Bellay-Langey*, II, pp. 190-1, 196-7 ; Schelhorn, *Ergötzlichkeiten*, I, pp. 270-94.

³ *State Papers*, VII, p. 626. Cf. *Corp. Reform.*, II, pp. 950, 952.

⁴ Schmidt, *Melanchthon*, p. 268 ff. ; Hefele-Hergenröther, 9, p. 877 ff.

⁵ Cf. Soldan, I, pp. 124, 127.

⁶ Clement's letter to King Ferdinand, March 30, 1534, in Laemmer, *Mantissa*, pp. 144-6 ; Bucholtz, 9, pp. 296-7.

de Loaysa, added another obstacle, and that was the policy England was pursuing.¹ Francis I, however, was the real obstacle, for he was afraid that if the Council met it would terminate the religious schism, and that would in no wise suit his policy.² Clement was also afraid of it, entertaining a lively sense of the assaults it might make either on his authority or on the financial abuses.³ He, no more than Leo X, realized the gravity of the crisis in Germany, and believed the promises which Francis readily made to him at the Marseilles interview in 1533.⁴ The Venetian Ambassador, Marino Giustiniani, expressed the exact truth when he remarked, "Whereas the schism in the faith has resulted in the heretics almost entirely withdrawing their obedience from the Emperor, the French King fears that if unanimity of religious opinion is restored by means of a Council, Germany will unite again in submission to Charles V."⁵ Instead of this, Francis had divided Germany in two from the Alps to the Elbe, and the western portion was entirely under his influence. *Divide et impera* was his maxim: it was also the maxim of the Lutherans. For example, the Suabian League had been the main support of the Emperor from its foundation in 1488. Charles and his brother, King Ferdinand, naturally upheld it. Its existence was renewed from time to time. It was obviously to the interests of Francis and the Lutheran princes, notably Philip of Hesse, to prevent its renewal. They stirred up internal jealousy within its ranks. It had been renewed in 1523 for eleven years, but the machinations of Francis of France and Philip of Hesse brought its existence to an end.

The French King was as successful in the west as he had been in the east, as triumphant with the Lutherans as he was with Henry. From 1520 to 1525 England had been hostile. The Battle of Pavia and the Treaty of Madrid wrought such a transformation of the balance of power that Henry was forced to reconsider his policy. Wolsey sought a closer alliance with Francis, and in May 1526 the League of Cognac was signed. The treaties of the April and May of the following year cemented this alliance. The rupture given to the equilibrium of Europe

¹ Cf. Loaysa's letter of April 14, 1531, in Heine, *Briefe an Kaiser Karl V.*, pp. 115, 417. Cf. pp. 171-2, and for the letter of the Pope to the Emperor, pp. 308-9, 539.

² Pastor, *Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 74 ff.

³ Heine, 27, 43, 50, 68, 333-94; Pastor, *Reunionsbestrebungen*, 76-7. Alberi, Ser. II, iii, p. 312.

⁴ Herminjard, III, pp. 183-6.

⁵ Report of Marino Giustiniani, in Alberi, Ser. I, i, p. 159.

was healed, and in 1528 Francis organized another expedition to Italy. National interests bound Wolsey to take the side of France: the private interests of Henry equally bound him—if he were to marry Anne Boleyn. It is significant that Europe attached importance to the political, not the religious, aspect of the divorce. Francis was delighted at the turn events were taking. If Henry sent Catherine away, did it not mean the termination of all possibility of any alliance between England and Germany? Therefore he supported Henry with all the forces at his disposal. He endeavoured to create a favourable literary opinion by bringing pressure to bear on the faculties of theology in order to secure a favourable reply from them. In April 1530, the faculty of theology of Orleans; in May, that of Bourges; and in September, those of Angers and Toulouse expressed their judgment that Henry was entitled to hold the view that Cranmer put before him. Francis obliged so conservative and reactionary a university as Paris to share the general judgment.

Strongly as the French King exerted himself at home, he exerted himself even more strongly abroad. In Rome he lavished his diplomatic resources on the side of Henry. Cardinals are approached, and some, Cardinal Trivulzio, for example, prove friendly. Above all the Medici Pope is influenced, or at least seems to be.

The links in the encircling of Charles V were almost complete. Within Germany the French king had secured an alliance with the League of Schmalkald. On its eastern border Suleiman I was pressing on with his hordes. Switzerland was on the side of France. The Swiss reformers, in imitation of the German, contracted a league with Constance, Zürich, Berne, Saint Gall, Bâle, and Strassburg among its members, in 1528. This league, like the German one, aimed at the restoration of Helvetic liberty.¹ As the Roman Catholic cantons adhered to Austria, the Protestant cantons were thrown into the necessity of seeking an alliance with France. In Switzerland there was a miniature contest between France and Austria fought out. The only link required for the completion of the chain was the papacy, and here the temporal interests of Clement VII helped the French king. For the Pope, like Leo X, was animated in his foreign policy by family considerations. To him Charles, not Francis, was the foe to be dreaded. Francis asked for his son Henry, Duke of Orleans, the

¹ Cf. Zwinglii, *Epist.*, VIII, p. 415, Maigret's letter to Zwingli, Feb. 21, 1530; *ibid.*, p. 416, "Zwinglii de foedere gallico epistola," Feb.-March.

hand in marriage of the young Duchess of Urbino, Catherine de' Medici, who was the Pope's niece *à la mode de Bretagne*.

It was fortunate for Francis that dynastic reasons actuated Clement so powerfully. Another difficulty remained. The French King was the staunch ally of the German Protestants and of the schismatic King of England. How was he to persuade the Pope that his alliances did not run contrary to the plans conceived for the reformation of the Church? Cifuentes, the Imperial Ambassador, urged these obvious arguments. Moreover, Suleiman in February 1532 was about to recommence his victorious march. Was it not well known that Francis, the most Christian King, was the ally of the Mohammedan conqueror? The diplomacy of France was extraordinarily clever. Francis put forward his plea that the leaders of the Lutherans, the Elector of Saxony, the Duke of Würtemberg, and the others, were dependent on him.¹ He would, therefore, do all in his power to persuade them to agree to the meeting of a Council in such a manner as had been customary in the Church from antiquity, though if Clement knew the history of the fourth century this assurance was not so satisfactory as it sounded. He probably did not. He wanted to hold a Council in order to reform the Church—provided his power was not shorn. Francis relieved him of this anxiety. At the same time that Francis was writing to the Pope in this strain, he was assuring Philip of Hesse that nothing would induce him to agree to the proposal he had just made to Clement.² The Pope informed the Emperor of the goodwill of the French King: the agreement of the two greatest rulers in Christendom rendered the success of the Council inevitable.

Since 1529 Charles had made every effort to secure a solution of the religious difficulty by the holding of a Council. At Bologna at the time of his coronation the Pope gave him a promise that he would convoke one. In December 1530, briefs had been issued. Francis never formally refused to signify his assent. He was a past master in the art of raising rumours and difficulties. It was easy to suggest all sorts of interested motives on the part of the negotiators. Technical points were not hard to raise. What were the articles to be passed by the Council? This opened up a large field. What was to be the place of meeting? Mantua and Piacenza were proposed by the Roman Curia, but to both places Francis found plausible objections. He returned to the question of principle. The Council must

¹ Albèri, Ser. II, iii, p. 304.

² Soldan, I, pp. 124, 127.

be universal and free. How were this universality and freedom to be assured? On second thoughts, was it necessary? Could not the princes and skilled theologians meet and settle the matter? Once the argument of the princes was employed, Francis pointed out to Clement that it rested with him to secure the presence of the Lutheran nobility. What power possessed the widely diffused political influence of France?¹ Such arguments weighed with the irresolute mind of Clement. He wavered and hesitated to take the plunge. To the dismay of the French Court, Clement granted Charles an interview at Bologna in January 1533. The latter was able to urge strong considerations for believing that Francis did not mean to agree to the meeting of the Council. The Emperor wrote to Francis on February 1, 1531, and received no reply till March 28. In it the French King laid down the condition that the agreement of all the princes to the holding of the Council should first of all be invited.² In other words, Francis imposed an impossible condition, clearly intimating his unalterable hostility to all attempts at reform.

At the Bologna interview the Pope promised the Emperor not to proceed with the English divorce, to maintain the *status quo* in Italy, and not to treat separately with France. For the moment Charles had gained a diplomatic victory, a decisive victory if Clement had only been resolute. On February 24, 1533, Clement sent a circular letter to the princes announcing the meeting of the Council at Mantua.

Much was lost for France, but all was not lost. Francis dispatched the Cardinals de Gramont and de Tournon to Bologna in January 1533. They complained as fiercely as Luther himself of the exactions of the Roman Curia. They mentioned the delay of the Pope in granting tithes, the sums the Curia extracted from France, the partiality shown to Austria, and the like. From complaint they proceeded to menace. What Germany had carried through, what England was carrying through, their sovereign might also undertake. He was determined that the Council must be national. Behind him stood not only the Lutheran princes, but also Henry VIII, Switzerland, and, he might have added, Suleiman I. If the Pope agreed with the policy of Charles that the Council should be general, then all money from France to Rome came to an end. Ecclesiastical censures did not weigh in the least with him.

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, II, p. 869, Melanchthon's letter to Du Bellay, Apr. 22, 1535.

² *Ehsses*, LIX; Heine, pp. 112-26, 416, 424 ff.

In the last resort the King could absolve himself, for was he not one of the faithful, in fact the Most Christian King?

The vacillations of Clement were steadied by these threats, and he promised to grant the King an interview, which took place at Marseilles on October 11, 1533. The main question discussed in this interview was the Council. Was it to be œcumenical, as Charles urged? Was it to be national, as the King urged? The irresolute Clement was torn in different directions. The circumstance that his family interests were more French than German was not without consideration. The uncle could secure the brilliant alliance of the Duke of Orleans for his niece Catherine. As the Pope must decide, he adhered to the French solution of the religious problem. There were other matters discussed, but this was the one of cardinal importance. In turn the King promised that he would take no part in the troubles in England, though he refused to withdraw from his alliance with Henry. His German alliance was useful to Clement, for was it not the method of securing the presence of the Lutheran princes at the National Council? The Most Christian King promised to put down heresy in his own kingdom. The interview was a complete triumph for Francis. Philip de Commines had noted the fact that "the English often win in battle, but the French always win in diplomacy."¹ Substitute for English Charles, and there is the reading of the situation after the interview of Marseilles. The last link in the chain was complete and Charles was encircled. His rival ruled over compact France, and had alliances ramifying over Europe from Constantinople to London. The western side of Germany from the Alps to the Elbe was an important sphere of his influence, and its destinies were controlled by him. Now, the crown of all was that the head of the Church had at last come over to his side. What power did Charles now exercise over France? The student of the growth of toleration may ask another question, What power did Charles now exercise over the Lutherans? Where were his triumphs at Diets? What was the value of the Edict of Worms?

For the benefit of Charles, Cardinal Cajetan drew up six objections to the meeting of a Council.² There was the obvious danger of precedent if the heretics were allowed to raise fresh discussions of errors that had already been condemned by

¹ Vol. iii, viii, 91 (Danett's edition, 1596).

² Hergenröther, *Konziliengeschichte*, 9, p. 767 ff.; Pastor, *Die kirchlichen Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 76 ff.; Heine, *Briefe an Kaiser Karl V.*, p. 106; Eheses, *Concil. Trid.*, 4, LII-LIV.

several councils. Such discussions served the Protestants by affording another opportunity for spreading their doctrines, and gave them the advantage of the presence of secular judges who listened to views on matters of faith on which the Church had pronounced. If they refused to acknowledge the authority of previous Councils, was it likely that they would submit to the one asked for? If the Protestants adhered to the authority of the Bible and rejected that of the Fathers and the Councils, what basis was there for discussion? Did not the Diet of Augsburg prove that the object of the heretics was to gain time in the hope that the Council might be dissolved without arriving at any decision? The old controversy as to the supremacy of the Pope or Council was certain to revive with disastrous results to the authority not only of the Pope, but also to that of the Emperor. It was a question whether the other princes would attend a Council held under the protection of the Imperial power, while the Pope could only preside if such protection were given. Gambara, Bishop of Tortona, brought these objections before Charles in January 1531. He also laid before him five conditions for the convening of the contemplated Council. Its business was to be sharply defined. The reconciliation of the Lutherans, the extirpation of heresies, the adequate punishment of the contumacious, and the war with the Turks were to be the matters taken in hand. The Emperor was to attend the Council in person, and when he left it was *ipso facto* to dissolve. It was to be held in Italy and nowhere else, and the Pope was to select the city of meeting. Only those canonically qualified were to have a decisive vote. The Lutherans were to sue formally before the Council and to send their representatives with proper mandates.¹ These conditions, in the language of Roman law, resembled a leonine contract by which the Church grasped everything and gave nothing. It is evident that, though Clement VII desired the reform of the Church, he felt afraid that a Council would afford the Emperor opportunity of exercising such a preponderating influence as to annul the independence of the Holy See. He used to say that a Council was always good when the matter at issue was anything but papal authority: when that was called in question nothing was more dangerous.² In former times a Council proved a source of strength to the Pope, whereas now it was a source of weakness. This view, of course, implied that Clement was above Councils and above all authority. He was

¹ Hergenröther, 9, p. 769 ff.; Pastor, p. 77; Heine, p. 537; Ehses, XLVII.

² Cf. Ranke, *Päpste*, I, p. 76 (6th ed.).

as much an absolute ruler in the Church as the Elector of Saxony was in the State. Councils like those of Constance and Bâle would shake his authority. Francis I shared these apprehensions, for he opposed the meeting of the Council with all his power. The strife between Emperor and Pope, between Emperor and King, afforded a breathing space to the Lutherans which proved of the utmost importance to them.¹ Protestants wanted to send not merely their princes, but their preachers, and could the Pope be asked to preside over an assembly in part composed of heretics ?

The resolution of the Diet of Augsburg caused grave searchings of heart to the Lutherans, who believed in a policy of non-resistance. After April 15, 1531, they were to find force employed against them, and this fact urged them to reconsider their attitude. The Court lawyers, the most conservative of men, altered their minds, and this alteration weighed strongly with Luther. The councillors of the Saxon electorate, with Chancellor Brück at their head, thought that whatever sentences the Reichsgericht might pronounce, in virtue of the Imperial edict of Augsburg, might be disregarded. This change of opinion on the part of the lawyers and councillors influenced John, Elector of Saxony, though for a time he continued to regard resistance as unlawful. He left Augsburg, and in Nürnberg he met Wenceslaus Link, a friend of Luther, and said to him, "Should one of my neighbours, or any one else, attack me on account of the Evangel, I should resist him with all the force at my command, but should the Emperor come and attack me, he is my liege lord, and I must yield to him, and what were more honourable than to be exterminated on account of the Word of God ?" The examples at home, and that of Philip of Hesse, gradually weakened his determination to obey the commands of the Diet.

Precedents were consulted. St. Austin mentions Nero as an example of the worst type of ruler, but adds that even such rulers receive their power through the providence of God when he judges that any nation may require such governors.² Gregory the Great emphasizes the doctrine of the sanctity and Divine authority of the sovereign. He traces the authority of the sovereigns direct to God. Naturally they must not under any circumstances be resisted.³ In a commentary by Bishop Atto of Vercelli, which was written during the second half of the

¹ Pallavicini, 2, p. 8 ; Hefele-Hergenröther, 9, p. 584.

² *De Civ. Dei*, V, 19 ; cf. V. 21.

³ *Moralium* in Job xxv. 16 ; *Regulæ Pastoralis*, III, 4

tenth century, there is a strong statement of the Divine authority of the secular ruler, whether he be Christian or pagan. He thinks it is impious to resist the King, even though he is unjust and wicked.¹ Peter Damian, in the middle of the following century, holds that the authority of the secular ruler in administering justice and punishing crime is derived from God.² It is obvious that the Imperialist writers held such views, but even an extreme papalist, Gerhoh of Reichersberg, an important witness of the middle of the twelfth century, asserted them in clear language.³ Another critic of the Imperialist school, Manegold of Lautenbach, conceives that the office of the King is sacred, though the holder of this office may have justly forfeited his authority. Though Honorius of Augsburg held that the authority of man over man was not primitive, being established to restrain men's sinful passions, yet he is also clear that it was established by God.⁴ John of Salisbury is equally positive that the authority of the prince comes from God and has the Divine sanction.⁵

When men make up their minds to pursue a given policy suitable precedents are at hand. Philip of Hesse addressed himself to the task of winning over Luther to a change in his views, and he employed skilful arguments. For instance, may not force be tried as "His Majesty is determined to re-establish the devil's doctrine?"⁶ This appealed to the mighty power Luther always ascribed to Satan. Nine days later he reminded the reformer that Charles V "took the oath to his princes at his election, just as much as they did to him. . . . Hence if the Emperor does not keep his oath to us, he reduces himself to the rank of any other man, and must no longer be regarded as a real Emperor, but as a mere breaker of the peace." Had not God come to the aid of the Bohemians and of "many others, too, against emperors and such like, who treated their subjects with unjust violence"? The legal and the historical line of argument made an impression on Luther. On October 28, 1530, he says to Philip that he hopes no blood will be shed. He adds he intends "in any case to publish a booklet shortly . . . admonishing all consciences that no subject was bound to render obedience should His Imperial Majesty persist." He will prove that the Emperor's demands are "blasphemous, murderous,

¹ *Exp. in Ep. Pauli ad Romanos*, XIII, 1.

² *Opusculum*, LVII, 1.

³ *De Investigatione Antichristi*, I, 72.

⁴ *Summa Gloria*, 26.

⁵ *Policraticus*, IV, 1.

⁶ Oct. 21, 1530, *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 286.

and diabolical," but his booklet was not to be called "seditious."¹ At Torgau he protested that the question did not concern him, since as a theologian his business was to teach Christ only. In secular matters he could only counsel compliance with the law, and any action taken should be in keeping with the "written laws." "But what these laws were he neither knew nor cared."²

The lawyers laid more stress on the canon law than on the opinion of such men as Manegold of Lautenbach. Employing canonical precedents, they prove that it was right to resist the Emperor by force, since "he proceeds and acts contrary to law," as he is not a competent judge in religious affairs. Even if he were such a judge, the appeal to the General Council stops his action. Should they not "obey God and evangelical truth rather than men?"³ The councillors assumed the same standpoint.⁴ They assumed that the Pope was subordinate to a Council, and they assumed the right of appeal from the Pope to the Council. They assumed that the doctrines of Luther had not been finally rejected by the Church, and that the Diet of Augsburg "admitted and allowed" that such doctrines should come before the next Council. This document was laid before the theologians, who were most unwilling to give a decision. Luther was embarrassed by his old opinions contained in such books as that *On the Secular Power*. He and his friends replied that they stood outside the question,⁵ since the councillors had decided independently of them in favour of armed resistance on the ground of the secular Imperial law. The theologians of Brandenburg opposed resistance. They thought that it was a question of the supreme secular majesty, not of a judge who was subservient to a higher secular power: hence the supposition of the lawyers would not stand examination.

At the end of October 1530 a change in the opinions of Luther, Melanchthon, and Jonas was evident in the memorandum they signed. It was quite true that hitherto they had taught "that the authorities must on no account be resisted," but they had not known "that the authorities' own laws, which we have always taught must be diligently obeyed, sanctioned this." The lawyers, however, have proved that it is lawful to resist the authorities, and the Scripture does not disprove this, when self-defence is called for, even though it should be against

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 295.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 64, p. 265.

³ End of Oct., 1530, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 64, p. 265; *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 296.

⁴ *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 299 *et seq.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, 8, p. 344.

the Emperor himself. Arming then is necessary, for "any day other cases may arise where it would be essential to be ready to defend oneself, not only from worldly motives, but from duty and constraint of conscience."¹

There was a conference on the matter which took steps eventually leading to the formation of the defensive League of Schmalkald. Naturally the envoys from the Saxon electorate laid due stress on the memorandum of the Wittenberg divines, and they carried the day against those of Brandenburg. The League of Schmalkald was first drawn up and subscribed to by John, Elector of Saxony, and Ernest, Duke of Brunswick, on February 27, 1531. Philip of Hesse was the chief agent in bringing together the league. Other subscribers were Prince Wolfgang of Anhalt, Counts Gebhard and Albert of Mansfield, and the cities of Strassburg, Ulm, Constance, Reutlingen, Memmingen, Lindau, Biberach, Isny, Lübeck, Magdeburg, and Bremen. The obligation, to which members of the league pledged themselves by oath, was "that when one party is attacked or suffers violence for the Word of God or for causes arising from it, or on any other pretext, each one shall treat the matter in no other way than as though he were himself attacked, and shall therefore, without even waiting for the others, come to the assistance of the party suffering violence, and succour him to the utmost of his power."² There was succour for their fellow-members: there was none for the Emperor, engaged in fierce contest with the Turks.³ The alliance was first concluded for six years: it was repeatedly renewed later, and strengthened by the accession of new members.

The League of Schmalkald exercised a strong constraint on the widening of the policy of persecution. At the Diet of Nürnberg, 1532, toleration was granted on the personal responsibility of the Emperor till the summoning of a General Council.⁴ Charles V agreed to a further extension of the amnesty to the Elector of Saxony and his allies, and that the Imperial Chamber should harass no one by prosecution on account of religion. The confessor of the Emperor, Loaysa, had in July 1530 written to his master recommending force as the true rhubarb for German as for Spanish heresy. But in a letter of June 8, 1532, he advised either a truce between Lutherans and Roman

¹ *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 298; *Briefe*, 6, p. 225, De Wette.

² *Briefwechsel*, 8, p. 298.

³ Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, pp. 131, 185.

⁴ Maurenbrecher, *Kath. Ref.*, pp. 339, 414; Ehses, LXXVII, LXXIX. Contrast Laemmer, *Mon. Vat.*, p. 123 ff.

Catholics, which would leave each party to believe as they pleased, or else an agreement that until the future Council they should all live under their respective rites without molesting one another. If, by the fault of the Pope, the Council should not meet within three years, thenceforth the Lutherans might live freely, and continue in their own form of belief without hindrance from princes or diets: all this the Church might grant, without blame, on condition that the reformers might save it from the common enemy, the Turk. This advice from a Spanish cardinal clearly faced the possibility of a permanent toleration—a point at which Charles himself never quite arrived.

Such proposals made the orthodox pamphleteers furious. In their opinion Erasmus, the friend of toleration, was still a heretic and worse, if possible, than Luther. Such was the opinion of Latomus, Laurent Ruffus, Vincent of Haarlem, and Nicolas des Clercs. The hatred of the Prince of Carpi had lost none of its fervour.¹ The Spaniards Sepulveda and Caranza surpassed the violence of Stunica. Gacho tarnished his name in Savoy, Standish in England. But the deaths of Zwingli and Œcolampadius had removed two able men, and a season of mildness set in.²

In 1532 Erasmus issued his *Precatio ad dominum Jesum pro pace Ecclesiæ*.³ "O Christ," he pleaded, ". . . in this tempest which puts in peril not only so many lives, but innumerable souls . . . we beseech thee, awaken. Thoughts of men cry to thee: Save us, we perish. The waves have overcome our human strength; all the efforts undertaken to calm them turn against us. O Jesus . . . we have need of thy voice. . . . Thou art the king of peace, inspire in us a mutual love." In France the Sorbonne turned a deaf ear to prayers like this, displaying a fierce zeal for orthodoxy. On February 1, 1532, it refused its imprimatur to Erasmus's editions of Ambrose and Augustine.⁴ It now gave forth its 1527 decision on his errors, and on April 3, 1532, forbade the booksellers, on pain of the secular arm, to print, receive, or sell any reply the scholar might make.⁵ This condemnation was in no wise confined to humanists, who were always a fair mark. In June 1530 the Sorbonne had censured the *Quodlibeta* of Cajetan,⁶ and, for the

¹ Hess, *Erasmus von Rotterdam*, I, 482.

² Erasmus's letter to Con. Godimus, Dec. 14, 1531.

³ *Opp.*, 4, p. 653.

Lib. Conclus., f. 230 (Feb. 1), f. 231 (Feb. 15).

⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 249. Cf. Imbart de la Tour, III, 223-35; Reusch, I, 156-9.

⁶ *Lib. Conclus.*, f. 234, June 1, 1532.

same purpose, its syndic Beda placed before his colleagues the commentaries of the Cardinal on the Psalms and the New Testament. A commission was appointed to deal with the matter. The Pope had honoured a work of the Cajetan with a brief: the Sorbonne sought a suspension of it from Parliament.¹ Nor did this member of the Sacred College stand alone in the pillory. By the order of Clement VII Cardinal Quiñones had corrected hymns and the breviary, and his work suffered the same treatment.²

In 1534, Wicel of Augsburg, a correspondent of Erasmus, published an urgent appeal in favour of the holding of a Council. The next year he sent forth his *Dialogue on the Council*, foreshadowing the reforms the Church required. In 1537 he wrote his *Method to obtain Peace in the Church*. Its keynote was the necessity of a reformation, not of a dissolution.³

Erasmus, sanguine to the end, dreamt that Christian concord might at last appear.⁴ The means to establish it was the calling of a Council, and Wicel now demanded the support of the Archbishop of Mayence for this plan. Luther had little belief in it and consequently less enthusiasm for it. He feared that such an assembly would give a verdict unfavourable to the Reformation. "A Council according to the use employed at this time, like that of Constance and many others, is a Council repugnant to the Word of God," such was his conviction; "it is in accordance with pride and human spite."⁵ Therefore he declined to admit any compromise between what he considered Divine truths and doctrines of the devil. A Council in 1521 was one matter: now it wore a completely different aspect. His opposition Church was then an incoherent body; now it was coherent in creed. It was then in want of political support, whereas now many princes stood behind it. His Church had fought and bled, reckoning on its bede-roll its martyrs and prophets.

As usual Erasmus proved the supporter of the party of conciliation. Wicel plied him with honeyed words on the services he could render: he would fight for the faith, he

¹ *Lib. Conclus.*, f. 251, f. 256, f. 257.

² Du Plessis d'Argentré, 2, p. 121 ff.

³ Cf. also Luther's *Tischreden* (Förstemann and Bindseil), 3, 349 f.; his *Briefe*, 3, 566; *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 678; Hess, *Erasmus von Rotterdam*, 2, 432. On the importance of Wicel cf. Pastor, *Die kirchlichen Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 140 ff.

⁴ Erasmus's letter to Tominski, Sept. 2, 1532, Miaskowski.

⁵ "Ein Concilium nach bisher gebräuchter Gewohnheit, wie das zu Costnitz und seines gleichen gewest, heisst ein Concilium wider Gottes wort, nach menschlichem Dünkel und Muthwillen," June 1533, De Wette.

would stand for the old orthodoxy.¹ He would act the part of a moderator, and would be unanimously revered as another Solon. In October 1533, Erasmus drew up a book on the re-establishment of concord in the Church, *De sarcienda Ecclesie concordia*.² In it he asks for an agreement founded on reciprocal concessions. Let people eat meat or fish at the command of their conscience or their stomach; but let them not trouble the public order, and let them charge a Council to take, in agreement with the lay authorities, measures leading to peace and religious unity, which with all the ardour of his soul he desired. In the shape of an exposition of Psalm lxxxiv he gave counsel how best to restore the unity of the Church and to root out abuses. He upholds in it the duty of submitting to the Church, but recommends both sides to be ready to pursue a policy of give and take. His ideal was that of Melancthon, of Bucer,³ of Sadoletto, of Budé⁴: restraint forms no part of their plan. With the same end in view he composed practical booklets on religion and worship. Among these was a sort of catechism, the *Expositio Symboli*, 1533. In it he only admits the doctrines on which Lutherans and Roman Catholics are agreed. Luther, therefore, deems that it was "slyly planned" to undermine all respect for Christian doctrine, and that for this purpose Erasmus was befooling his readers, as the serpent did in Paradise. "Erasmus makes use of ambiguities," in the opinion of Luther, "intentionally and with malice."

In July 1533 Erasmus wrote a booklet on *De amabili Ecclesie concordia*.⁵ Both sides were to make concessions. Let the Church suppress in her creed, in her worship, in her Christian life, everything savouring of superstition. On the other hand, let the reformers duly recognize the rights of tradition. Let the theologians, leaving to the one side questions as useless as those of the schoolmen, agree on the definition of necessary matters, e.g. grace, nature, the faith which justifies, the works required for salvation, the great love of God which excludes neither reward nor merit. Let the faithful, attending to their duties to their country, allow the bishops and doctors the care of interpreting the Bible. Let all, people and clergy alike, beware of injuring, libelling, excluding, and cursing. Surely God then will take pity on this common effort towards

¹ Wicel's letter to Erasmus, Sept. 8, 1532. Cf. his letter to Erasmus, March 30, 1533, Wächter, *Zs. des Berg. Gesch. ver.*

² Ellinger, *Melancthon*, 363, 365-6.

³ Cf. *Comment. in Epist. ad Romanos*, the 1737 ed., pp. 247, 301.

⁴ *Philologia*, 43.

⁵ *Opp.*, 5, p. 470 ff.

humility, love, and Christian renunciation on both sides. So Erasmus strove to maintain unity without sacrificing intellectual liberty, so he strove to conciliate men without compelling them.

With this belief in religion was combined much superstition. Humanists and theologians, artists and statesmen, exhibit the most profound confidence in the influence of the stars on the destiny of man. Nicholas Machiavelli has as fervent a faith in this influence as Benvenuto Cellini.¹ "There are," maintains Guicciardini, "aerial beings who converse with men: I know it by experience."² The philosophers of the school of Marsilio Ficino admit the invisible presence of spirits who manifest themselves by omens and dreams.³ Neither the irony of Petrarch, nor the critical sense of the two Villani, nor Pico della Mirandola's book *Against the Astrologers* had been able to cure the Medici of their credulity.⁴ Had not Marsilio Ficino predicted that Giovanni would sit in the seat of St. Peter? ⁵ As this prediction was fulfilled, the credulity of Leo X became increased. In striking language both Savonarola and Pico della Mirandola condemned astrology. Pomponazzi denied the immortality of the soul, nevertheless he believed in magic. The occult sciences, alchemy, chiromancy, divination, passed from Trevisano to Paracelsus, from Jerome Cardan to Della Porta. They call up the spirits of the dead, they converse with demons.⁶ Melanchthon records in his letters events as marvellous as any related by Livy. Marcello Palingenio met in the campagna of Rome four supernatural beings who arrived from the moon, giving them information on Clement VII.⁷ The cool common sense of Rabelais was one day to act as a charm in laying these spirits.⁸ The Pantagruéline prognostication is a bold parody of the predictions of the "Aftrophiles, Hypernephéliftes, Anemophylaces, Uranopetes et Ombrophores."

The uncommon sense of the French humanist was outside the reformer. Luther fought against the devil, whose voice

¹ *Discorsi*, I, 56; *Stor. fior.*, IV and VIII.

² *Ricordi politici*, CCXI.

³ Ficini, *Theol. Platon. de Immort. anim. Duodevig. lib.*, Parisiis, 1559; Poggii, *Facetiæ*, fol. 174; Poliziano, *Conjur. Pactian. Comment.*; Piero Valeriano, *De Infelicit. literat.*

⁴ *Epist. senil.*, III, 2; *Novel*, 151; Giov. Villani, III, 1; X, 39; XI, 2; XII, 4.

⁵ Paolo Jovio, *Vita Leon. X*, III. Cf. Friedrich, *Astrologie*, 20, 22.

⁶ Corn. Agrippa, *De occulta philos.*, cap. 39. Cf. B. Cellini's *Memoirs*.

⁷ *Zodiacus, Vitæ*, X, p. 770.

⁸ Cf. *Epist. medicin.*, II, 1; XV, 5 (against astrology); *De Falsitate iudiciariæ astrologiæ*.

resembles, according to him, the grunts of a pig : he threw his inkstand at his head. He mixes, in his *Table-talk*, monastic legends on the devil, old German beliefs in familiar spirits, hobgoblins, and fairies. In his solitude at the Wartburg, demons enter his room and break hazel-nuts on the joists of the ceiling.¹ His master, St. Austin, in his vivid description of temptation, lays much stress on the share taken by the devil.² It is noteworthy that Erasmus gives a serious account of the devil burning a small town in Germany on Shrove Tuesday, 1533.

In his attitude to science Luther was not a whit more advanced than the peasants from whom he sprang. Copernicus did not print his *De orbium celestium revolutionibus* till 1543. On June 4, 1539, conversation at Luther's table turned on this astronomer's new theory of the revolution of the earth. The reformer at once dismissed it with the remark that Joshua commanded the sun, not the earth, to stand still. To him it appeared that this "astrologer" aimed at upsetting the whole art of astronomy.³

Luther issued a challenge to Erasmus and to all Erasmians, including Egranus, generally, who had broken with him. His business was to "purify the Church from the brood of Erasmus." This brood included Wicel, Crotus Rubianus, and Campanus.⁴ Erasmus had already seduced Zwingli, and he had also "converted Egranus, who believed just as much as he," and that is nothing.⁵ On another occasion Luther remarks, "The only foundation of all his teaching is his desire to gain the applause of the world ; he weighs the scales with ignorance and malice."⁶ "What is the good of reproaching him with being on the same road as Epicurus, Lucian, and the sceptics ? By doing so I merely succeeded in rousing the viper, and in its fury against me it gave birth to the Viperaspides (i.e. the *Hyperaspistes*). In Italy and at Rome he sucked in the milk of the Lamiae and Megaræ, and now no medicine is of any avail." "This man learned his infidelity in Rome" ; therefore he wishes "to have his Epicureanism praised." Even in what Erasmus says on the creed we see the mouth and organ of Satan. He may be compared with the enemy of the Gospel, who, while men slept, sowed tares in the field. We can under-

¹ *Tischreden*, 1446, the Frankfort ed., 1854.

² Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, XV, 23.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, p. 319.

⁴ Cordatus, *Tagebuch*, p. 488.

⁵ Mathesius, *Tischreden*, p. 343 (in 1544).

⁶ Cf. Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, p. 311.

stand how Sacramentarians, Donatists, Arians, Anabaptists, Epicureans, and the like have again made their appearance. He sowed the seed and then disappeared. And yet he stands in high honour with Pope and prince. "Who would have believed that the hatred of Luther was so strong? A poor man is made great simply through Luther."¹ In this letter to Nicholas Amsdorf he is thinking of leaving the humanist to dissolve in smoke like Eck and others.¹ He also warned Amsdorf that if he were tempted to write against Erasmus he ought not to allege anything that was not certain.² There is moderation in the preface he wrote for Anton Vorvinus's reply to Erasmus's proposals for restoring unity to the Church. According to him the chief obstacle to reunion is the weight attached by his opponents to the Church. To an individualist like him their perpetual cry of "the Church, the Church, the Church," was repellent.³

In spite of this attempt at moderation, it seems as if Luther could not control himself when he thought of what he had hoped from Erasmus, and of how those hopes had been disappointed. Erasmus "might have been of great service to the cause of the evangel: often he was exhorted to this end. . . . But he considered it better that the Gospel should perish and not be preached than that all Germany should be convulsed and all the princes troubled with risings."⁴ He is the worst foe of Christ that has arisen for the last thousand years.⁵

To him the humanist was another Epicurus. Even what was doubtful in his writings had to be taken in the worst sense, and he would be unable to believe this serpent if he came to him with the most outspoken confession of Christianity. Did not Erasmus say that the Redeemer had come into the world simply as an example of holiness? Did he not also describe the Incarnation in obscene and blasphemous language? Was he indeed a believer at all? "He regards the Christian religion and doctrine as a comedy or a tragedy." To this "incarnate scoundrel, God—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—is merely ludicrous." Like Democritus, the cynical heathen philosopher, he looks on our whole theology as nothing better than a fairy-tale.⁶ All this Luther wrote with the utmost conviction as though it were absolutely true.

¹ Letter to Amsdorf about March 11, 1534, *Briefwechsel*, 10, p. 8 ff.

² Letter to Amsdorf, March 31, 1534, *Briefwechsel*, 10, p. 36.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 7, p. 526 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 25², p. 89.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 61, p. 104 ff. Cf. Mathesius, *Tischreden*, p. 301.

⁶ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 18, p. 64; Erl. ed., 7, p. 162.

Luther was so anxious for progress that he sometimes forgot order. Erasmus was so anxious for order that he sometimes forgot progress. How far apart they had drifted is plain from the letter Luther wrote to Amsdorf. "It is better to ruin letters than religion, if letters are unwilling to serve, but tread Christ underfoot."¹ It is not matter of surprise that Erasmus should remark, "You descend to pure calumny, abuse, and threats, and yet you wish to be esteemed free from guile, pure, and led by the Spirit of God, not by human passion."² "Can the Evangel," he pertinently asks, "then be preached in so unevangelical a manner?" "Have all the laws of propriety been abrogated by the new-born Evangel, so that each one is at liberty to make use of any method of attack either in word or writing? Is this the liberty which you restore to us?"³

Erasmus wrote: "You wish to be taken for a teacher of the Gospel. In that case, however, would it not better beseem you not to repel all the prudent and well-meaning by your vituperation, not to incite men to strife and revolt in these already troubled times?"⁴ "You snarl at me as an Epicurean. Had I been an Epicurean and lived in the time of the Apostles, and heard them proclaim the Gospel with such invective, then I fear I should have remained an Epicurean. . . . Whoever is conscious of teaching a holy doctrine should not behave with such insolence and delight in malicious misrepresentation."⁵ "To what class of spirits does yours belong, if indeed it be a spirit at all? And what unevangelical way is this of inculcating the Holy Gospel? Has perchance the risen Gospel done away with all the laws of public order so that now any one may say and write anything against any one? Does the freedom you are bringing back to us spell no more than this?"⁶

On the Feast of the Assumption, 1534, seven men vowed a vow on the height of Montmartre, and their leader, Ignatius Loyola, was one day to present the answer of the Society of Jesus to this freedom. Amerbach had judged Luther's attack insane: Erasmus for his part addressed his reply to "one not sober."⁷ Others, he says, might well explain it as a mental aberration or due to the influence of

¹ Luther to Amsdorf, June 21, 1534, De Wette.

² *Hyperaspistes*, 10, p. 1327.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 1335.

⁴ *Opp.*, 10, p. 1558. Cf. Ellinger, *Melanchthon*, 374, 378, 420.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1555.

⁶ *Hyperaspistes*, p. 1334.

⁷ *Opp.*, 10, p. 1557. Cf. Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 663.

some evil demon. Point by point he meets the accusations of Luther. He shows that the passage concerning the creed being a mere fable had been invented by Luther himself by means of deliberate distortion and shameful misrepresentation. Luther had also said that "whoever tells untruths lies even when he speaks the truth," and that he would refuse to believe Erasmus even were he to make an orthodox confession of faith. The reply of the scholar is : "Whoever spoke this bit of wisdom was assuredly out of his senses and stood in need of hellebore." As for the charge of deliberately leading others into infidelity, "he will find it easier to persuade all that he has gone mad out of hatred, and is suffering from some other form of mental malady, or is led by some evil genius." As for his alleged blasphemy concerning the birth of Christ from the Virgin Mary, he protests, "I can swear I never said anything of the kind either in a letter, as Luther makes out, though he fails to say which, or in any of my writings." Moreover, he confesses to some surprise at finding Luther, whose own language was not remarkable for modesty, suddenly transformed into a champion of cleanliness of speech. The licence of the reformer's speech he never liked, and he liked much less the licence of appeal. The few were the only capable judges of the questions behind the Reformation. He came to regard the appeal to the average man as alien to the spirit of Christianity : it might be *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, but of this he had considerable doubts. "Your object," he forcibly protests, "is to raise revolt, and you are perfectly well aware that this has been often the result of your writings. Not thus did the Apostles act. You drag our controversial opinions before the tribunal of the unlearned."¹

The last months of the life of Erasmus were gloomy. He despaired about the progress of human learning. He renewed his old confidence in Melanchthon, and they shared their fears for the future. "As I see no remedy for these disorders," he told Melanchthon, "I give all my care to letters, of which I think I foresee the ruin."² When Shimei cast stones at David and cursed him, the king said, "Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." In a letter written shortly before his death, Erasmus mentioned these words to Melanchthon, "I apply to myself the words of David when he was attacked

¹ Cf. *Opp.*, 10, p. 1334.

² Erasmus's letter to Melanchthon, Feb. 5, 1535, *Melanchth.*, *Opp.*

with stones, and with curses harder than any stone: 'Dominus præcipit illis ut maledicerent mihi: quis scit an misereatur mei?'"¹

The minds of Erasmus and Melanchthon were essentially moderate. Both showed far more leaning to humanism than to theology. "Agreement," Melanchthon saw in 1533, "cannot be established by arms if men do not first of all respect conscience; no peace is permanent when minds are divided." The order and organization of the Church were almost as much to him as they were to Erasmus, and he took the part of those who were unwilling to make a clean sweep of tradition. To him, as to Sir Thomas Browne, the extreme age of an opinion vouched for its truth. Both humanists eagerly and passionately desired unity. It has been lost, nevertheless Melanchthon² constantly catches glimpses of it. The fear of the anarchy, the excesses of the prophets, the denials of the rites of the Sacraments, the decay of learning—all stirred his heart deeply. The desire of unity came to him with renewed force. The religious divisions threatened the dissolution of Christianity, and the more threatening their aspect the warmer became his desire for reunion. "We have no dogma," so he told Campeggio, "contrary to that of the Roman Church. We are ready to obey her . . . if she is ready not to contest or refuse permission to certain matters which we cannot change, even if we would."³

He welcomed every attempt towards agreement. "I endeavour as much as possible," he wrote, "to soften the quarrels of religion."⁴ He tried "to heal the anguished conscience, to tear light from darkness and to render the glory of God shining." To the Bishop of Cracow Erasmus wrote: "By various kinds of punishment about twenty-four have been destroyed at Paris: very many have fled in fear, among whom are not a few noblemen. Some of these the King, who has now become somewhat milder, has recalled, restored to them their goods and permitted them the right of pronouncement of dogmas (as they say) on condition, however, that they do not attack the constitution of the realm. They say that the originator of this moderation is the King of England and Paul III. In England you will learn what happened to the

¹ Erasmus to Melanchthon, June 6, 1636. *Corp. Reform.*, III, col. 88.

² Holbein painted a portrait of Melanchthon which is now in the Welfen Museum, Hanover. It is one of the best likenesses we possess.

³ *Corp. Reform.*, II; *Epist.*, 668. Cf. his letter to Campeggio, July 6, 1530, *ibid.*, 170.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 739

Bishop of Rochester and Thomas More (than which pair of men England never had any more holy or better) from the fragment of a letter which I send you. In More I feel I am myself destroyed, such oneness of soul (as Pythagoras said) was in us two."¹

Among the new cardinals appointed in 1536 by Paul III were many sympathetic to Erasmus. There were Fisher, his friend, and Sadoletto, his correspondent. There were Jean du Bellay, who was the enemy of the reactionary Sorbonne, and Reginald Pole, a humanist, as much after his own heart as Fisher himself. He would have liked Contarini, for was not his theological outlook a mediating one? Did he not aim at reconciling the doctrine of justification and of grace, and a reconciler was a man who always secured the admiration of the thinker? He would have welcomed Carafa, the founder of the Theatines, for he was a man of holy life. The Pope offered the red hat also to Erasmus, and the honour has never been better deserved: a more faithful servant the Church never possessed. The honour was enhanced by the means of delivery; for a correspondent of Erasmus, Louis Ber, brought the news personally.² In reply to a letter from Freiburg the Pope answered most graciously.³ Paul III pays a generous tribute to the labours of the scholar, and at that moment Erasmus's services in the cause of peace were more in his mind. He tells the humanist that the dream of his life is about to be realized, for there is to be a Council and Erasmus is to be a member of it.⁴ It is too late. He is now in his seventieth year without the strength either to fight or to write. The membership of the Council and the membership of the Sacred College are no longer for him. "There is nothing now for me except to grow old from day to day. I expect neither dignities nor pension."⁵ Nevertheless his heart and his head were gratified; his heart because he appreciated the honour of the cardinal his head because he no less keenly felt that at last his ideas were to prevail. He had confidence that the new pope was one of the greatest who ever wore the papal tiara, the ablest statesman Erasmus had met in the course of his varied life,

¹ Erasmus's letter to the Bishop of Cracow, Aug. 31, 1535, 1513 A.

² *Epist.*, 1510, Erasmus's letter to Barth. Le Masson, Aug. 24, 1535.

³ *Epist.*, 1501, May 31, 1535.

⁴ Cardauns, *Paul III*, 202 ff.; Fontana, I, 492-4; Raumer, *Histor. Taschenbuch*, VI, ii. 149.

⁵ "Me nec sacerdotia nec pensiones morari, . . . in dies mortem expectantem, nonnunquam et exoptantem, tam divi sunt interdum cruciatus," *Epist.*, p. 1501.

and the scholar had met or corresponded with all the important men of his day.

The year 1535 was in some respects almost as memorable as the year 1492. In spite of his alliance with the Lutherans, Francis on January 19, 1535, at length declared himself hostile to German theology—in France—and executed some of his own subjects who did not hold the doctrine—so convenient to sovereigns—of *cujus regio, ejus religio*. That year Calvin was writing his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, an amazing production for a man of his years. There was no room for him in his native country, France, or indeed in Strassburg. He set out for Geneva there to wield a power, secular as much as ecclesiastical, which even Paul III might envy. As the French revolutionaries offered assistance to all peoples desirous of freedom, so Calvin offered his pen and the men he inspired. To the Low Countries he sent that powerful apostle of toleration, Marnix; to England he sent Peter Martyr, and to Scotland he sent John Knox, three forerunners of three revolutions.

Literature in 1535 is just as pregnant with meaning as life. That year Robert Olivétan translated the Bible into French. He was a sound Hebrew scholar, acquainted with the Jewish commentators of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In the Apocryphal books, and in the New Testament, he employs Lefèvre's translation, and when he differs from this scholar the difference is due to Erasmus's Latin translation. Olivétan's was as much the favourite version of the French reformers as Tyndale's was that of the English. It was perused by candle-light at night, in secret by families; it was read in prisons and caves. It was burnt at the stake and the *auto de fé*. The year 1535 also saw Coverdale's translation of the Bible, from the Latin and German, appear with the approval of Henry VIII and Cromwell. At Lyons appeared another work, *La vie inestimable du grand Gargantua, père de Pantagruel, jadis composée par l'abstracteur de quintessence, livre plein de pantagruélisme*. It is an encyclopædia covering many sides of life with as much merriment as Erasmus's *Moriæ Encomium*, and with as much joviality as fitted Luther with enjoyment of life. Rabelais became as hostile to Calvin as Erasmus was to Luther, and for the same reasons. He removed from his books expressions he had formerly employed, and among them were *sorbonistes*, *sorbonagres*, *sorbonicoles*. The removal is typical of much in the mind of Rabelais. The Protestant vanishes: the Gallican remains. Little as he realized it, he and Calvin

were proceeding—though on different roads—to the goal leading to freedom of conscience.

Paul III was meditating in 1535 the convocation of a Council which was to heal the diseases of the Church.¹ He sent Vergerio to Germany as his ambassador to Luther, and the reformer and the nuncio met. It was indeed time to take action, for in 1535 events were moving fast in England. In January the Act of Supremacy proclaimed Henry Supreme Head on Earth of the Church of England. Two significant books appeared this year. In his *De Unitate* Reginald Pole attacked the new title, and in his *De Vera Obedientia* Stephen Gardiner expounded the nature and the limits of the duty of a subject to his sovereign.

The North witnesses the progress of the Reformation, the South the beginnings of the counter-Reformation. The leaders of the progressive party, Carafa, Contarini, Pole, Sadoleto, become cardinals; the honour is offered to Erasmus, though he refuses it. They draw up a report which formed the basis of the reforms inaugurated by the Council of Trent. The Pope was no less fortunate in the Society of Jesus, founded the preceding year, than in his Sacred College. Reformers were required, but so were men to carry out the reforms. Ignatius Loyala and his fellow-students, Bobadilla, Faber, Lainez, Rodriguez, Salmeron, and Xavier were the very men for this mission. The men in favour of stern measures increased in influence at Rome as at Paris. In 1535 a decree of the Spanish Inquisition ordered the excommunication of every possessor of Lutheran books. It was no new policy in the favourite home of Charles V. Almost half a century earlier, Torquemada had burnt Hebrew Bibles simply because they were the works of Jews. The dilemma attributed to the Caliph Omar is always a favourite one with the persecutor. It was fitting that the founder of the Jesuits was a Spaniard. It may well be that Erasmus, now in his sixty-ninth year, did not grasp the significance of 1535.

With men of good feeling death invariably softens feelings of animosity. It was not so with Luther. Erasmus passed away in 1536. Eight years afterwards Luther could say that he desired that the annotations of the New Testament by the humanist should not be further disseminated "because they contained Epicureanism and other poison."² Erasmus had

¹ Luther's *Briefwechsel* (Burkhardt), 232, 242 f.; his *Briefe*, 4, 630, 632, 662, 668 f., 670 f., 683, 688; Friedensburg in *Nuntiaturberichte*, 1, 57 ff., 324 ff.; Hergenröther, *Konziliengeschichte*, 9, 827.

² Mathesius, *Tischreden*, ed. Kröker, p. 343.

destroyed many "in body, soul, and spirit." He had injured the Gospel as much as he had furthered the interests of learning. "He was a terrible man, and Zwingli was led astray by him. Egranus¹ he had also perverted, and he now believes just as much as Erasmus." How could he bear to say that "his end was *sine crux et sine lux*" ?²

Lefèvre passed away in the spring of 1536, and Erasmus on July 12. That very year, had these two scholars been able to perceive it, Calvin published at Strassburg his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the book of all books which marked the parting of the ways between humanism and reform.

Erasmus belongs to that select band of men of whom Pericles declared the whole world to be the tomb. As the best of men and wisest of rulers, Antoninus Pius, lay dying in his home at Lorium in Etruria, he gave the last password to the officer of the guard: it was *Æquanimitas*. It had been the inspiration of the life of the humanist, the secret of his failures no less than of his successes. In his noble plea for toleration, the *Areopagitica*, Milton recalls in the Egyptian story how Typhon and his fellow-conspirators dealt with the god Osiris. They took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds of heaven; and as the Puritan points out, "from that time ever since the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitated the careful search that Isis made for the strangled body of Osiris, went up and down gathering limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all." Some Erasmus found, and not the least valuable was that zeal for truth, that method in its investigation, which was one day to open the path to toleration.

Like Erasmus, Edmund Burke was anxious to see the men, to see the things, to take the circumstances into consideration.³ Both men were the products of circumstance, governing their conduct by the distinguishing colour, the discriminating effect time gave to the event.⁴ Both are wrongly accused of a fundamental change of attitude. Just as Erasmus altered the direction of his sympathies with the Lutheran revolt after the year 1519, so Burke altered his after the year 1789. Nevertheless,

¹ John Wildenauer of Eger, who left Luther's party.

² For Luther's comments on Erasmus's death cf. Köstlin-Kawerau, 2, 313, and 613. Cf. Feugère, *Erasmie*, 362-4; Stichart, *Erasmus von Rotterdam* 264-6.

³ Speech, May 11, 1792.

⁴ Burke, *Works*, I, p. 384.

the alteration was more in appearance than in reality. The thought of the two men was the same, though circumstances had modified its application. Just as Erasmus saw in the Lutherans the menace to balance, harmony, organic unity, so Burke saw in the French revolutionists precisely the same danger. When Erasmus wrote his *Novum Instrumentum* he wished the ploughboy to read it. The Peasants' Revolt changed him as the outbreak of 1789 changed Burke. In his early days Erasmus bestowed a thought upon India, where he desired to secure readers. Later he came to hold with Burke that it was the duty of the multitude to bow before the powers-that-be, for were they not ordained of God ?

The student in the closet can suspend his judgment: the statesman cannot afford delay. Time refuses to allow it. Erasmus, in spite of his *Æquanimitas*, was forced to come to a decision on many matters he desired to leave open. In the untying of the tangled knot of events he, no less than Burke, emphasized the need of prudence, that *φρόνησις* which Aristotle glorifies. Both knew "how many a weary step is to be taken before they (i.e. the people) can form themselves into a mass which has a truly politic personality,"¹ for they were familiar with the slow process of the discipline of nature as it operates through the centuries. Erasmus feared the "red ruin and the breaking up of laws in the Church" just as much as Burke feared them in the State. An individual may fall in a moment: the Church and the State may similarly be bereft of the results of the ages. With the example of Russia fresh in our memories, this is not so improbable as it at one time might have seemed. Undoubtedly Erasmus believed that the madness of the revolutionary might destroy the treasures of countless years. Burke and he perceived that human nature was more apt to feel grievances than to prescribe remedies therefor, and these remedies might perchance prove poisonous to true life. Deaf to Erasmus's counsels, Luther alienated humanism from reform, to the lasting loss of both. Deaf to Erasmus's counsels, the papacy condemned Luther and lost a continent. Deaf to Burke's counsels, England tried to assert her right and also lost a continent. Neglect of the advice of these sages tempts us to agree with Schiller and Hegel that the history of the world is the judgment of the world.

Erasmus and Burke are as convinced that man is naturally religious as Aristotle was that he was naturally political. Both realized that his life is "the known march of the ordinary

¹ *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

providence of God.”¹ They fervently believed that “religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort.”² Reformation was necessary, but the price of it was too high if it meant the destruction of the unity of Europe. In days of peace, Erasmus and Burke believed in freedom of discussion. When the days of war arrived, they thought more about the limits within which discussion was to turn. The reason is obvious. Circumstances had changed. What was permissible when Erasmus was with More in Lord Mountjoy’s home by the Thames in 1500 was no longer permissible by the Rhine in 1520. Burke puts the case with almost irresistible force. “I must first beg leave just to hint,” he remarks at Bristol in 1780, “to you that we may suffer very great detriment by being open to every talker. It is not to be imagined how much of service is lost from spirits full of activity, and full of energy, who are pressing, who are rushing forward to great and capital issues, when you oblige them to be continually looking back. Whilst they are defending one service, they defraud you of a hundred. Applaud us when we run; console us when we fall; cheer us when we recover; but let us pass on—for God’s sake, let us pass on.” Erasmus experienced the force of such considerations. He had been the friend of toleration, of freedom of discussion. At the same time he recognized that the fanatic, by his inability to desist in time, was imperiling the cause he had at heart. Like Cromwell, he thought that there were some fundamentals which the wisdom of the ages had reached, and these he refused to call in question. “I will not,” spoke Burke on February 6, 1772, “enter into the question how much truth is preferable to peace. Perhaps truth may be far better. But as we have scarcely ever the same contained in the one we have in the other, I would—unless the truth were evident indeed—hold fast to peace, which has in her company charity, the highest of virtues.”³ Plainly he was ready in 1772 to sacrifice truth to peace.

Erasmus and Burke were passionately convinced that Church and State had their foundations in religious faith, and that they could not survive its disintegration. To them there was no question of the relations between Church and State. Such relationship presupposed that they were two bodies in their nature distinct and independent, whereas “in a Christian commonwealth, the Church and the State are one and the same

¹ *Regicide Peace*, letter ii.

² *Ibid.*, letter iv.

³ Burke, *Works*, II, p. 468.

thing, being different integral parts of the same whole.”¹ Plato declares that it is vain to expect any man to be a great statesman unless he cares for something greater than politics. Erasmus and Burke were then great statesmen, for they cared for the deepest matter in human nature, the life of the soul. That life was eminently an orderly one, and for order Erasmus and Burke evinced the most passionate enthusiasm. “The liberty,” avowed the latter in 1774, “the only liberty I mean is a liberty connected with order.”² Richelieu, Cromwell, and Charles III of Spain were all rulers who appealed to him, for they shared his delight in good and orderly government.

Goethe wished that the Reformation had been conducted by a man like Erasmus rather than by a man like Luther. His wish was a vain one. It is true that nature does not normally take a leap; it is no less true that she has her earthquakes as well as her still slow processes, her Etnas as well as her Jungfraus. In times when vast forces are called into being, the eruption of a volcano may accomplish in a week what the silent processes of nature may not accomplish in an age. Erasmus could never have left the impression on the world which Luther left. The arguments of the scholar were cogent: the arguments of the reformer were compelling. Here is the gulf that yawned between the two men.

*The echoes of the past within his brain
The sunrise of the future on his face*

—these are the qualities of the great statesman. Unmistakably the echoes of the past resounded in the minds of Erasmus and Burke. Did the sunrise of the future irradiate their faces? Both felt such an unwavering conviction in the soundness of the existing regime, when it had been somewhat modified, that they thought that human insight was barely capable of arriving at such a pitch of excellence, save after the lapse of countless ages. “Perhaps,” remarked Burke, “the only moral trust with any certainty in our hands is the care of our time.” The past they knew with loving intimacy, the present they came to fear. In the issue, faith in the future now and then failed them. Erasmus,³ however, retained to the end his

¹ Speech, May 11, 1792.

² Speech on arrival at Bristol, 1774, *Works*, I, p. 177.

³ Holbein painted portraits of Erasmus which are now in Vienna, Parma (1523), Turin, Bâle (1523), the Louvre (1523), and the Earl of Radnor's collection. The Louvre portrait represents Erasmus in profile, the white hair visible beneath the scholar's cap. The Bâle portrait is a study for the Louvre one. The Radnor portrait is a noble piece of work. In it Erasmus

belief in truth, his conviction that in its progress lay the hope of mankind.

looks in front of him and a smile plays round his sensitive mouth. The portraits from Longford Castle and the Louvre show deep insight into the character of the scholar. Cf. chap. 11 of G. S. Davies's book, *Hans Holbein* (London, 1904); A. Machiels, *Les Portraits d'Érasme*, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (Nov. 1911, pp. 349-61); and A. B. Chamberlain, *Hans Holbein the Younger*, chap. 8 (London, 1913). Metsys painted a portrait of Erasmus of which there is a reduced copy at Hampton Court: it is a good half-length. There is a fine portrait of the humanist in Windsor Castle by G. Pencz, a pupil of Dürer's. Dürer made two drawings of him and engraved his head from memory. Compare the portrait in Queens' College, Cambridge. On March 29, 1528, Erasmus wrote to H. Bott: "Dürer took my portrait, but it is not the least like me." Cf. Dürer's *Briefe*, 119 ff.; *Reliquien*, 127 ff.

CHAPTER XI

CHURCH AND STATE

THE favourite plan of Erasmus, conciliar reform, was not forgotten. On November 13, 1535, the nuncio Vergerio met Luther for the purpose of discussing the constitution of the assembly.¹ The reformer proposed to attend it, and Vergerio assumed that the Elector of Saxony was aware of this. John Frederick did not pronounce a meeting at Mantua impossible, but plainly preferred one on German soil. He refused to give a definite answer on the ground that he was obliged to consult the other members of the Schmalkaldic League. They were conscious of their great political strength and placed their conditions high. If they considered a Council necessary, it must be completely free, and its members should be chosen by the combined decision of the Emperor, kings, princes, authorities, and suitable persons of all ranks.² These were to examine into the controversies of religion and settle them according to God's Word. In this attitude to the proposed Council the League was supported by Henry VIII and Francis I. The English King was now ready to defend the Augsburg Confession, provided some modifications were made in its articles. The French King was sorely afraid that the Council might solve the religious difficulties, thus restoring the position of Charles in the Empire. He instructed his envoy, Guillaume du Bellay, to aim at the summoning of national councils in Italy, France, and England.

Luther was not only fortunate in such friends as Melancthon; he was also fortunate in his enemies. Leo X, Adrian VI, Paul III, and Charles V³ threw away magnificent opportunities,

¹ Luther's *Briefe*, 4, 622; *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 896 ff.; Köstlin, 2, 370 ff.; Friedensburg, *Nuntiatursberichte*, 539 ff.

² *Corp. Reform.*, 2, pp. 1018-22; Ehses, 4, CXVI-CXIX. Cf. *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 968, for the answers of the envoys of Henry VIII. On the Church and Reform cf. the important chapter Mr. R. V. Laurence has written in the *Cam. Mod. Hist.*, II, pp. 639-89, especially pp. 639-55.

³ Baumgarten, *Geschichte Karls V.*, 3, 283 f., 291 ff.

and Luther profited at least as much by the mistakes of his enemies as by his own achievements. He seldom failed to make the most of an opportunity, and Henry and Francis provided him with many.

Paul III was most anxious to solve the religious question. Men of learning knew he was as much a Pope of the Renaissance as Leo, possessing the insight denied his predecessor. In politics he was neutral, though such neutrality served the cause of France. The wide experience of his sixty-seven years, the breadth of his intelligence, the deference he showed to men and opinions, the tact with which he had handled the affairs of his own life, his own surpassing firmness, and his power of steering a middle course seemed to promise the man for the emergency. He resolved to summon a General Council to meet in Mantua in 1537. Men like Melanchthon dreaded the results of a permanent breach, and for a time he worked for the acceptance of the offer of a Council. The city of Nürnberg followed this counsel. The obstacle in the way was the princes, who were afraid that the curtailment of their secular and ecclesiastical authority was threatened. The Wittenberg theologians gave John Frederick a memorandum discussing some of the contingencies to which the Council might give occasion. Was the celibacy of the clergy to be enforced? Such a measure they regarded as an injury to the common welfare. Princes and men set in authority are bound to forbid immorality as they would a violation of the marriage tie. "All the more are they in duty bound to prohibit open idolatry." Exultingly Luther signed this statement.¹ The Saxon Elector asked the reformer to draw up articles on which the Protestants might find a secure foundation for their belief. At the end of 1536 the Wittenberg theologians had composed the Articles of Schmalkald.² The Confession of Augsburg was animated by a spirit of reconciliation, but this Confession by the spirit of difference.³ In the new preamble Luther declared that Protestants required no Council.⁴ Furious attacks were made on the Mass, purgatory, and the power of the Pope. The Estates commissioned Melanchthon to draw up in their name, for the

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, 3, pp. 126-31.

² Luther's *Briefe*, 4, 612-3; *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 823, 837, 892; 3, 54, 56, 70, 74-5, 95, 97.

³ Pastor, *Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 100.

⁴ On Luther's attitude to the Council in 1536 cf. his *Briefe*, 5, 45; 4, 292, 454; *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 655, 661; 3, 36, 65, 119, 126, 131 ff., 157, 167, 169, 201, 235, 240; Neudecker, *Urkunden*, 268; Seckendorf, 3, 152; Köstlin, 2, 369; Maurenbrecher, *Geschichte der katholischen Reformation*, 365; *Werke*, Erl. ed., 31, 411 ff.

Kings of France and England, a justification of their action in rejecting the Synod.¹ Indeed, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse thought of summoning a national and evangelical assembly of their own, to be convened by Luther together with his assistant bishops and other ecclesiastics. Just as Paul III saw the necessity for uniting his forces, the reformers saw the necessity for uniting theirs. The King of England was plotting a close alliance between the Scandinavian states and himself. The followers of Zwingli felt their isolation, and, in spite of grave theological differences, signified in 1537 their agreement with their brethren in Germany.

By his diplomacy in 1526 and in 1533 Francis left Charles isolated in Europe. It seemed as if the years 1535 and 1540 were to renew these triumphs. During the year 1535 the King was under the influence of that friend of the Reformation, his sister, Margaret of Angoulême. With much of Melancthon's theology he was in sympathy, and he asked the German princes to send him that moderate man. Margaret was opposed to the reactionary party led by the powerful Anne de Montmorency, and she was opposed to the reactionary attitude of the Sorbonne, one of the most Tory bodies in Europe. The piety of the Elector of Saxony was only equalled by his narrowness, and he influenced the League of Schmalkald to refuse. Francis I had—perhaps it was only for the moment—visions of larger ideas than mere political schemes. To the immense loss of the growth of toleration, he suffered himself to be discouraged, and Anne de Montmorency once more won the ascendancy.

In 1540 the King renewed his desire to see if his larger ideas could be carried out. Morelet du Museau, the French Ambassador, and Sleidan the historian arrived in Ratisbon in 1540, bearing with them far-reaching plans. The League of Schmalkald was offered a great opportunity, but it committed the sin Dante denounces so vigorously: it made the great refusal. The acceptance of the alliance France offered meant the complete ruin of the House of Hapsburg, the disappearance of the opportunities of which the House of Hohenzollern eagerly availed itself. The destruction of the House of Hapsburg was necessary if the progress of toleration was to be at all rapid. There were, however, immense obstacles in the way. Chief among these was the bigamy that Philip of Hesse committed on March 1, 1540. It had been condoned by Luther himself,

¹ Walch, 16, p. 2433 ff.; Ehses, IV, 63 ff.; Baumgarten, *Geschichte Karls V*, 3, p. 297; Egelhaaf, II, pp. 320-1.

by Melancthon, and by Bucer. A more fatal condonation there could not possibly have been. The fortunes of the House of Hapsburg were largely due to the happy marriages its members made. Some of its fortunes were also due to the *mésalliances* other Houses made, and among these must be reckoned the bigamy of Philip of Hesse. It was among the cogent reasons which obliged the League of Schmalkald to decline the alliance Francis offered in 1540. Philip was afraid of the consequences of his act, and, in order to safeguard himself, he sought protection at the hands of the Emperor. He felt his dangers, and he negotiated through Granvelle, who saw every action from the point of view of pure statesmanship.¹

How favourable the circumstances were from other points of view is evident from the fact that the crotchety Elector of Saxony was now anxious to show himself friendly to Francis. There were the negotiators, Morelet du Museau and Sleidan. The one was to dissuade the Catholics, the other the Protestants, from offering any concessions. To the papal nuncio at his Court the French King expressed his fears that Contarini, the papal delegate at Ratisbon, was conceding too much to the Protestants. To the Protestants he simultaneously expressed his fears that Contarini was conceding too little.² Had it not been for the bigamy, this astute diplomacy might have been as successful in 1540 as it had been in 1533. Much as the German princes and cities had accomplished for the future of toleration, how much more they might have accomplished had circumstances permitted their acceptance of the alliance France offered!³ They might have anticipated the work achieved by the Low Countries, by Sweden, by Henry IV, and by Richelieu. But it was not to be. Instead of an immense immediate advance towards toleration, there ensued the defeat of Mühlberg, the necessity for the Protestants to "learn Spanish," with the Spanish King and Holy Roman Emperor for their tutor.

During the first of these two occasions, that is, in 1535, France outwardly advocated a Council while secretly she opposed it with all the skill of her Ambassador, Guillaume du Bellay. He was as clever an adept as his master in the art of suggesting awkward points to be settled before the Council could meet. How were the Lutherans to come to any agreement till they

¹ Cf. Brandenburg, *Moritz von Sachsen*, I, p. 96.

² Ranke, I, p. 167; Dittrich, *Regesten.*, pp. 318-9; Pastor, *Reunionsbestrebungen*, p. 251; Sugenheim, I, pp. 84-5.

³ Luther's *Briefe*, 4, 626 f.; his *Werke* (Walch), 17, 2576; *Corp. Reform.*, 2, 902 ff., 907 ff., 918 ff., 936, 945, 950; Lingke, 225 f.

had first reached one among themselves ?¹ That was an ugly dilemma for the theologians. For the princes he had another crux. Could not representatives of the two Churches hold a discussion ?² Of course points of difference were sure to arise. The application was tolerably obvious. Du Bellay submitted to the Lutherans the favourable verdict of his master on the *Counsel*. Francis seemingly was prepared to take a long step on the road towards agreement. He accepted the views of Melanchthon—they were also the views of Erasmus—on the origin of the papal primacy. He also accepted the humanist's views on faith and human liberty, the worship of the saints and of images.³ He thought it possible to come to an understanding on the question of the relation of faith to works. He saw the necessity of revising the liturgy of the Mass and of reducing, as Erasmus required, the number of private Masses. On the Mass and on the conception of merit and purgatory he agreed with Melanchthon that a fresh study was required. All these ideas could be discussed at a genuine conference undertaken in a spirit of conciliation. In spite of his defence of the celibacy of the clergy, Francis was willing to grant a dispensation to the clergy already married. Perhaps he believed this would appeal to Luther. Clement VII had allowed communion in both kinds. The new pope, Paul III, could reform monasticism and suppress perpetual vows, as Erasmus strongly wished. This plan is not so chimerical as it appears, for Paul III was the greatest Pope of the sixteenth century, and he was perfectly capable of executing it.⁴

The outlook on the death of Clement VII on September 25, 1534, was black enough. If he was unhappy during his pontificate of eleven years it was at least as much due to the formidable tasks the critical time set him as to any other cause. The defection of so large a part of Germany and Switzerland, the whole of England, and the Northern States left his Church in a hazardous plight.

Du Bellay urged the ideas of his master without rest and with haste. He discussed them with the Chancellor of Saxony, Brück. The Lutheran leaders appreciated the friendship of

¹ Speech of Du Bellay to the Elector of Saxony, *Corp. Reform.*, II, p. 1010, Dec. 16, 1535.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 1013, Dec. 19.

³ Lanz, II, p. 144.

⁴ There is an impressive portrait of Paul III by Titian in the Museo Nazionale, Naples, and another by him in the Hermitage, Petrograd: it is a powerful presentment of the Pope. Titian also painted Paul III in an unfinished group with Ottavio and Cardinal Farnese, his grandsons. Another portrait of the Pope by Titian has disappeared.

France and the prospects of a national Council.¹ They, however, looked askance at the theological eirenicon Du Bellay proposed for their urgent consideration. They accepted the principle that the French might send delegates to them, and that they might send delegates to Germany. They cautiously added that the theological question was so grave that it could not be suddenly settled. They, at any rate, possessed no mandate in the matter, and they referred it to their respective States. The alliance which the reformers refused, Paul III eagerly desired to consummate from another standpoint. He wished, as the prime consideration, that the holding of the Council might reconcile Charles and Francis. Therefore when the Germans showed the Laodicean spirit he rejoiced. On June 18, 1538, he met the King at Nice, and on July 14 the King and the Emperor met at Aigues-Mortes. For sixteen years the two potentates had been rivals, and there must have been strange thoughts in their mind when they came together. Charles still has his mind set on the holding of the Council. Francis has ceased to approach the point of view of Melanchthon: he is now under the influence of the Conservative party led by Anne de Montmorency.² There was a passing return to his old frame of mind in 1540, but it soon disappeared. Charles and Francis arranged the question of the Milanese, and other matters followed this augury. Francis did not forsake his alliances with Henry VIII and the German princes. He did forsake his policy of comparative toleration towards the Huguenots. At Nice he had promised Paul III that he would exert himself against heresy; at Aigues-Mortes the Emperor strengthened this determination. In 1530 the Edicts of Coucy and of Lyons had allowed some protection to the Huguenots. These edicts were torn up in 1538, and the break between Francis and the French reformers lasts for the rest of his reign.

The problem of the relationship of the territorial State to the Church continued to absorb more and more the thoughts of Luther. In his exposition of Psalm ci³ he holds up for the admiration of the evangelical princes the example of King David. With his eye plainly fastened on recent history he tells them that in order to exterminate false doctrine David

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 25, 175 ff., 202 ff.; 65, 59 ff.; Lauterbach, *Tagebuch*, 46; *Opp. Lat. var.*, 7, 434 ff.; Pastor, *Reunionsbestrebungen*, 95; Rommel, *Philipp von Hessen*, I, 417.

² Decrue, *Anne de Montmorency*, pp. 338-56.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 313 ff. Luther's comments on Psalm lxxxii, made in 1530, deserve attention. Cf. R. Sohm, *Kirchenrecht* (Leipzig, 1892), I, 552; Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens*, 23 ff.

"made a visitation of the whole of the kingdom." "He always checked any public inroads of heresy. For the devil never idles or sleeps, hence neither must the spiritual authorities be idle or slumber." "Oh, what a great number of false teachers, idolaters, and heretics was he not obliged to expel, and in other ways to stop their mouths. . . . The true teachers, on the other hand, he had everywhere sought out, promoted, called, appointed, and commanded to preach the Word of God purely and simply. . . . He himself diligently instituted, ordered, and appointed true teachers everywhere, himself writing Psalms in which he points out how they are to teach and praise God." "David in this way was a pattern and masterpiece to all pious kings and lords . . . showing them how they must not allow wicked men to lead souls astray."¹ "I say again, let whoever can be another David and follow his example, more particularly the princes and lords."² David led pious princes and kings to assume a proper attitude to the churches. He was also a "model in secular government" which "can have its own rule apart from the kingdom of God." To such rule obviously all popish princes ought to confine themselves, and they ought not to try to instruct Christ how to govern his Church and spiritual realm.³

In 1536 there arose in Erfurt a dispute on the nature of the true Church. The Town Council had roughly handled some of his preachers, and Luther came to their assistance.⁴ Since 1525 he had had trouble with the Councillors. Both Churches, by the Convention of Hammelburg of 1530, had been tolerant. A capable Franciscan friar, Dr. Conrad Kling, attacked the Lutherans in his sermons. The leader, Melanchthon, and Jonas, on September 20, 1533, addressed a letter to Lang and his colleagues, adjuring them to stand fast.⁵ Kling continued his arguments, and in 1536 Luther, Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, and Myconius signed a memorandum setting forth the marks of the Church. It exalted the spiritual power at the expense of the secular,⁶ and this may have offended the Town Council, for it did not cease to employ the restrictions on the preachers,

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 320.

² *Ibid.*, p. 323.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 324 ff.

⁴ *Briefwechsel*, 11, p. 40 ff.

⁵ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 55, p. 25; *Briefwechsel*, 9, p. 341. On Melanchthon's attitude to toleration cf. N. Paulus, *Protestantismus und Toleranz in 16. Jahrh.*; his *Luther und die Gewissensfreiheit*, 40-53; and his article on *Servet's Hinrichtung im luterischen Urteil* (in *Hist.-pol. Blätter*, 136, 151). Paulus's work is to be read with caution.

⁶ *Briefwechsel*, 9, p. 342.

which they resented. Luther's proofs that his is the true Church are that she possesses the true Word and the true Sacraments, her preachers are appointed by the Church under the influence of the Spirit, and are very learned men full of all grace: their flock recognize their authority.

Thirteen years before, Luther had insisted on the complete separation of Church and State. This separation is now limited only to the "false priestlings" and their princes. That is, such realms have no jurisdiction in matters of religion, and therefore they cannot possibly persecute Lutherans. In this case the secular and spiritual government is wrongly confused when "spiritual or secular lords and princes seek to change and control the Word of God, and to lay down what is to be taught or preached." On the other hand, when a Lutheran prince, following David's example, "by virtue of his office" requested the suppression of false teaching, this "spiritual rule was nothing more than a service offered to God's own supremacy." Had David said, "My good people, act differently from what God has taught you," then he would have been guilty of confusion of the spiritual and temporal, of the Divine and human government. Moreover, such a prince does not intrude on the "spiritual or Divine authority, but remains humbly submissive to it and its servant." "For," he proceeds to explain, "when directed towards God and the service of his sovereignty, everything must be made equal and made to intermingle, whether it be termed spiritual or secular." "Thus they must be united in the same obedience and kneaded together, as it were, in one cake."¹

Supported by God's grace David could truly say of the two authorities he combined, "I suffer neither the ungodly man in the spiritual domain nor yet evildoers in the temporal."²

In the past the Pope of Rome had been all in all. Now it is the sovereign of the land who, as God's own vicar, is all in all. In fact, Luther places all ecclesiastical functions and conditions, so far as they belong to the outward domain, under the territorial prince. It is but another example of the working of the law that "new presbyter is but old priest writ large." Any semblance of spiritual authority, which the congregation once possessed, is now resigned into the hands of the Christian David. "That a Christian assembly or congregation has the right and power to judge of doctrine and to appoint and dismiss

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 39, p. 327 ff.

² *Ibid.*, p. 358 *et seq.*

preachers" was his opinion in 1523.¹ The ruler drives his negligent or reluctant subjects to hear the preachers. Had not the patriarch performed this duty? He uses the greater excommunications and removes from their posts those professors of theological or other faculties who oppose the Evangel, just as he makes his authority felt on the preacher who forsakes the right path. In a word, he is the chief guardian of the young and of all who need his protection in order that where his subjects do not take thought for their salvation he may "force them to do so, in the same way as he obliges them to give their services for the repair of bridges, roads, and ways, or to render such other services as their country may require."²

Luther's conception of the State finally grows into a kind of theocracy. "It was the Reformation," according to O. Gierke, "that brought about the energetic revival of the theocratic ideal. In spite of all their differences Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, and Calvin agree in emphasizing the Christian call, and, consequently, the Divine right of the secular authority. Indeed, on the one hand by subordinating the Church more or less to the State, and on the other by making the authority of the State dependent on its fulfilling its religious duties, they gave to the Pauline dictum 'All authority comes from God' a far wider scope than it ever had before."³

The power of the prince receives an enormous accession from the fact that he is the head of a theocratic State. Moreover, he is a ruler to be supported even against the Emperor. After the formation of the League of Schmalkald Luther is never found reverting to his original disapproval of armed resistance to the Imperial commands. "If the Emperor or the authorities purpose to make war on God, then no one must obey them." In this case every one must resist, for it is no "disobedience, rebellion, or contumacy to refuse to obey and assist in shedding innocent blood."⁴ To fight for the Evangel is no revolt. Both privately and publicly he justifies opposition and violent resistance to the authority of the empire. If the Emperor "be in a war against our religion, our worship, and our Church, then he is a tyrant. Of this there is no question. Is it not lawful to fight in defence of piety? Even nature demands that we should take up arms in defence of our children and our families. Indeed, I shall, if possible, address a writing

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 11, p. 408; Erl. ed., 22, p. 141.

² To the Elector John, Nov. 22, 1526, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 53, p. 387; *Briefwechsel*, 5, p. 406.

³ *Joh. Althusius und die Entwicklung der naturrechtlichen Staats-theorie*,

⁴ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 30, 3, p. 447; Erl. ed., 25², p. 111.

to the whole world exhorting all to the defence of their people."¹

In his *Table-talk* he poured forth his altered views on the question of resistance. In it he says, "it is true a preacher ought not to fight in his own defence, for which reason I do not take a sword with me when I mount the pulpit, but only on journeys." "The lawyers," he remarks on February 7, 1538, "command me to resist the Emperor, simply desiring that a madman should be deprived of his sword. . . . The natural law requires that if one member injure another he be put under restraint, made a prisoner and kept in custody. But from the point of view of theology there are doubts."² I reply, however, that statecraft permits, nay commands self-defence, so that whoever does not defend himself is regarded as his own murderer." On the other hand, as a "believer in the kingdom of Christ he must suffer all things." In some instances, however, it is necessary to get rid of "the Christian man and bring forward the political,"³ just as a man, peaceable though he may be, may at once slay the violator of his wife. "We are fighting, not against Saul, but against Absalom." Besides, the Emperor might not draw the sword without the consent of the seven Electors. "The sword belongs to us, and only at our request may he use it."⁴ "Without the seven he has no power; indeed, if even one is not for him his power vanishes and he is no longer monarch. . . . I do not deprive the Emperor of the sword, but the Pope, who has no business to lord it and act as a tyrant."⁵ "The Emperor will not commence a war on his own account, but for the sake of the Pope, whose vassal he has become; he is only desirous of defending the abominations of the Pope, who hates the Gospel and thinks of nothing else but his own godless power."⁶

When in the Saxon electorate John Frederick expelled the Jews in 1536, Luther, though pressed by the Jew, Josel Rosheim, would not exert himself on their behalf. Rosheim no doubt thought of the noble protest the reformer uttered in 1523 against the persecution of this race. Johann Reuchlin, the restorer of Oriental learning, had advocated the right of Jews to freedom of conscience both as citizens of the Empire and as having undertaken no obligations to Christianity. According to Luther

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., p. 334, *Tischreden*.

² He quotes Matt. v and I Peter ii.

³ *Colloquies*, ed. Bindseil, 8, p. 363 *et seq.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 366 *et seq.*

⁵ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, p. 194 ff.

⁶ *Colloquies*, ed. Bindseil, 8, pp. 365, 367.

the Jews were hostile to Christianity, and he declared his intention of attacking their obstinacy in print as soon as God granted him time and opportunity.¹ In keeping with this intolerant spirit, Calvin writes that all the Roman Catholics who had risen in rebellion against Edward VI in England, and refused to give up their superstition, "well deserve to be repressed by the sword which is committed to you, for they attack not only the King, but even God."²

The Jews, in Luther's opinion, blasphemed Christ. Were he a ruler, he would offer them a thousand florins to prove their insulting assertions: if they could not "I would have their tongues torn out by the root."³ It is plain that the excessive interest they charged was a strong motive in his mind. They swallowed up everything by usury: when they lend a thousand florins, they received twenty thousand.⁴

The attitude of Erasmus stands in striking contrast. "I should see no inconvenience," he held, "in binding myself to friendship with a Jew, provided that in my presence he did not blaspheme Jesus Christ." Luther's outburst against the Jews is the more remarkable when we recollect that in mediæval times non-Christians were not so exposed to persecutions as heretical Christians.

In his anger against the priests and the papists he goes so far as to place them on a level with the Turk, and to advise, in May 1540, their being slaughtered. In 1539 he holds, "Were I the Landgrave I should set about it and either perish or else slay them because they refuse peace in a good and just cause; but as a preacher it does not become me to counsel this, much less to do it myself."

In his book *On the Office of Princes*, 1539, Melanchthon recorded no less than nine reasons to prove that Christian rulers, like the Jewish king, are bound by the Divine law to root out idolatry. He urged the Lutheran authorities, in the interests of public worship, to employ coercive measures against negligent

¹ Luther's letter to Josel Rosheim, June 11, 1537, *Werke*, Erl. ed., 55, p. 186; Mathesius, *Tischreden*, p. 419; *Briefwechsel*, 11, p. 240; *Sämnittl. Werke*, 32, pp. 217, 233-6, 252-4, 259-60.

² *Opp.*, 13, p. 68; *Corp. Reform.*, 41.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, p. 375 ff. Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, 2, 442-5; Lewin, *Luther's Stellung zu den Juden*, 31, 45, 57, 72, 77, 91, 103-4, 106; Gratz, *Geschichte der Juden*, 9, 259; Jost, *Geschichte des Judentums und seiner Sekten*, 3, 210 ff.

⁴ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 62, p. 366. Cf. also *ibid.*, 19, 45-75, *Dass Jesus Christus ein geborner Jude sei*; *ibid.*, 32, 99-274, *Von den Jüden und ihren Lügen*; *ibid.*, 32, 275-358, *Vom Schem Hamphoras und vom Geschlecht Christi*. All these were written in 1543.

Protestants. "I should be pleased," he tells the Margrave Joachim of Brandenburg, "were the authorities to make a stringent rule of driving the people to Church particularly on holidays."¹

While the ruler had thus a clear conception of his duties the reformers spoke strongly in favour of armed resistance to Imperial orders. Before the formation of the League of Schmalkald they had been doubtful. How far they had travelled is visible in the memorandum addressed to the Elector John Frederick, January 1539, and signed at Weimar by Luther, Melanchthon, Bucer, and Jonas. Peace had been concluded between Charles V and Francis I, and the League of Schmalkald occupied a dangerous position. The Elector asked for this memorandum, inquired how far the allies might take advantage of the war with the Turks, and whether they might make their assistance against the Turks contingent upon certain concessions to be granted to the new worship. The reformers had already "given their answer and opinion, and there was no doubt that this was Divine truth, which we are bound to confess even at the hour of death, viz. that not only is defence permitted, but a protest is verily and indeed incumbent on all." Not only Imperial law, but the law of God, "to whom we owe this duty," command that "idolatry and forbidden worship" should not be tolerated. There are references to the Biblical examples supporting this contention.² In the Old Testament the "kings of Judah are praised for exterminating idolatry." "Every father is bound to protect his wife and child from murder, and there is no difference between a private murderer and the Emperor, should he attempt unjust violence outside his office." The instance is parallel with that when the "overlord tries to impose on his subjects blasphemy and idolatry." War, therefore, must be waged, just as "Constantine fell on Licinius, his ally and brother-in-law." David, Hezekiah, and other holy kings risked life and limb for the honour of God. There is, however, this important limitation. "This is all to be understood as referring to defence." But "where the ban has been proclaimed against one or more of the allies," in practice "discord has already broken out." For those under the ban have lost "position and dignity," and may commence to attack at once. Still "it is not for us to assume that hostilities should be commenced at once." This is a matter for those actually concerned.

In his *Commentary on St. John*, 1537-8, Luther expresses

¹ Letter to the Margrave Joachim, Sept. 14, 1531, *Corp. Reform.*, 2, p. 538.

² They are Exodus xx. 7; Psalm ii. 10-11 and lxxxii. 3; 2 Timothy i. 9.

his annoyance with the encroachments of the State, maintaining that "the two governments should not be intermingled to the end of the world, as was the case with the Jewish nation in Old Testament times, but must remain divided and apart in order that the pure Gospel and the true faith may be preserved, for the kingdom of Christ and the secular government are two very different things."¹ Still "you will see that the devil will mingle them together again . . . the sword of the Spirit and the secular sword. . . . Our squires, the nobles and the princes, who now go about equipped with authority and desire to teach the preachers what they are to preach, and to force the people to the Sacrament according to their pleasure, will cause us much injury; for it is necessary 'to render obedience to the worldly authorities.' Hence 'what we wish, that you must do,' and thus the secular and spiritual government becomes a single establishment."²

In his book *On Councils and the Church*, 1539, Luther defines the true Church as the holy community of Christians, and one may recognize it by a number of outward signs. It exists wherever God's Word is preached, baptism is administered, the Lord's Supper is eaten, the power of the keys is exercised, there is a regular priesthood, the cross and persecution, and the offering up of prayer, praise, and thanks.

When episcopal authority was abolished the Elector of Saxony assumed jurisdiction as a sort of a bishop. As Melancthon put it, he was the principal member of the Church.³ This jurisdiction dealt above all with matrimonial cases, which, according to Luther, belonged entirely to the secular courts, matters of tithe, certain offences against ecclesiastical or secular law, and points of Church discipline affecting public order. This was all in accordance with Luther's statement that the Church possessed no power to govern, that the only object for which it existed was to make men pious by means of the Word, that the secular authority was the only one able to make laws and formally to claim obedience "whether it does right or wrong."⁴ It follows that the State in assuming such jurisdiction was doing nobody any injustice; it was merely exercising its right. The authority it employed was not ecclesiastical, but only the common law exercised for the purpose of preserving sound doctrine and the true Church.

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 46, p. 183.

² *Ibid.*, p. 185.

³ Cf. Melancthon's tract, *De potestate papæ*, added to the Schmalkaldic Articles in *Die symbolischen Bücher*, 1907, ed. Müller-Kolde, p. 339.

⁴ Luther, *Von guten Wercken*, 1520, *Werke*, Weim. ed., 6, p. 259 et seq.

Next came the appointment of ecclesiastical superintendents by the sovereign, the nomination or removal of pastors and unqualified teachers, the carrying out of visitations, the drawing up of Church regulations, and the convening of synods or consultations. To the assumption of all these powers by the State, Luther raises no objection, partly because the power of the keys, according to him, included no coercive authority, and partly because the idea of the leading member of the Church was great enough to carry such functions with it.

The introduction of the Consistories in 1539 was a result of the idea expressed by Justus Jonas in his memorandum, viz. that if the Church possesses no legal power of coercion for the maintenance of order she is doomed to perish. After some hesitation Luther gave his consent to the new institution. He consoled himself with thinking that though it was appointed by the sovereign it was a spiritual tribunal of the Church. After his death in 1546 the Consistories retained the name of Ecclesiastical Courts, though as a matter of fact they became a department of the civil judicature. This transformation agreed with the inclination of Melancthon to leave ecclesiastical affairs to the secular arm. In practice he abandoned the conception of an invisible Church even more completely than Luther. The rigid doctrinal system for which he came to stand in the interests of the pure preaching of the faith, the duty which he assigned to the State of seeing that the proclamation of the Gospel conformed to the standard of the Augsburg Confession, and the countenance he gave to persecution, all this proved that the rule of the sovereign was not uncongenial to him. The princes, as principal members of the Church, must in his opinion take care "that errors are removed and consciences are comforted," and, above all, they were to assist in "checking encroachments of the popes."

In 1539 Luther wrote his *Von den Conciliis und Kirchen*, analysing in it the marks of the Church. The Augsburg Confession of 1530 recognized pure doctrine and true Sacraments as the two decisive ones. Luther, expanding them into seven, practically gives these two. His marks are the possession of the Word of God,¹ the right teaching and belief in the Sacrament of Baptism, the right giving, believing, and receiving of the Sacrament of the Altar, the keys of forgiveness through faith, the ordination of ministers, the Church's public prayer, praise and thanks to God; and, lastly, the Christian people is outwardly recognized by the sacred emblem of the Cross. "In her

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 25², p. 418.

(i.e. the Church) each one must be found, in her each one must be enrolled, whoever wishes to be saved and to come to God, and, outside her, no one will be saved.”¹ In 1545 the theologians of Louvain begged the State to defend their faith. Luther thereupon remarks that “it is not the duty of kings and princes to confirm right doctrine ; they themselves have to submit to it and obey it as the Word of God and as God Himself.”

More in accordance with his old ideas Luther sought to persuade himself that even without the help of any synods and general laws, it would still be possible to re-establish order by means of supervision to be exercised with the assistance of the State, backed by the penalty of exclusion. As against laws and regulations for the guidance of the life of the Church he returned to the conceptions of his earlier years. After the establishment of the Consistories he wrote to Prince George of Anhalt on June 10, 1545, that “so long as the sense of unity is not well rooted in the heart and mind outward unity is not much use, nor will it last long. . . . The existing observances (i.e. in matters of worship) must not become law. On the contrary, just as the schoolmaster and father of the family rule without laws, and, in the school and in the house, correct faults, so to speak only by supervision, but not by rules for the future. . . . Everything depends on the minister of the Word being prudent and faithful. For this reason we prefer to insist on the erection of schools, but above all on that purity and uniformity of doctrine which unites minds in the Lord. But, alas ! there are too few who devote themselves to study ; many are just bellies and no more, intent on their daily bread. . . . Time, however, will mend much that is impossible to settle beforehand by means of regulations.”²

“If we make laws,” he points out to Prince George, “they become snares for consciences, and pure doctrine is set aside, particularly if those who come after are careless and unlearned. . . . Already during our lifetime we have seen sects and dissensions enough under our noses, how each one follows his own way. In short, contempt for the Word on our side and blasphemy on the other side proclaim loudly enough the advent of the Last Day. The ministers of the Word must first of all become one heart and one soul. For if we make laws our successors will lay claim to the same authority, and, fallen nature being what it is, the result will be a war of the flesh against the flesh.”

¹ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 9², p. 285 ff.

² Letter to Prince George, June 10, 1545, *Briefe*, 6, p. 379, De Wette.

Nevertheless he is fond of bewailing the stubbornness of the heretics ; it was a subject of wholesome fear to all. It penetrated "like water into their inward parts, and like oil into their bones." So far do they go that they see "salvation and blessing" exclusively in their own doctrine : they are the men who "come right again," "the others remain under their own curse." "Neither have I ever read," he remarks, "of any teacher who originated a heresy being converted." "The true Evangel which teaches the contrary of their doctrine is, and always will be, to them a devil's thing."¹ "No heretic," he protests in 1542-3, "will let himself be talked over. . . . A man is soon done for, when the devil thus lays hold of him."² Such a man boasts that "he is quite certain of things." "No Christian," he holds in the spring of 1543, "ever held so fast to his Christ as a Jew or a fanatic does to his pet doctrine."³ He also is convinced that his opponent is a liar "as surely as God is God."⁴

To Wenceslaus Link Luther says, in 1541, that it will be the fault of the priests if the saying "To death with the priests" is carried into practice.⁵ To Melanchthon he also on June 22, 1541, writes, "I verily believe that all our priests are bent on being killed, even against our wish."⁶ Yet he can affirm that "no one can be a papist unless he is at the very least a murderer, robber, or persecutor," for "he must agree" that the "Pope and his crew are right in burning and banishing people."⁷ The most detestable thing in their faith is the Mass. He would rather have "kept a brothel, or been a robber, than have sacrificed and blasphemed Christ for fifteen years by saying the Mass."⁸ In a passage in the *Table-talk* he considers, in the winter of 1542, that "Philip (Melanchthon) is not as yet angry enough with the Pope. . . . He is moderate by nature and always acts with moderation, which may possibly be of some use, as he himself hopes. But my storming knocks the bottom out of the cask ; my way is to fall upon them with clubs . . . for the devil can only be vanquished by contempt. Enough has been written and said to the weak, as for the hardened nothing is of any avail. . . . I rush in with all my might, but against the devil."⁹

¹ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 19, p. 609 *et seq.* ; Erl. ed., 38, p. 445 *et seq.*

² Mathesius, *Tischreden*, p. 295.

³ *Ibid.*, 317.

⁴ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 61, p. 5.

⁵ June-July, 1541, *Briefe*, 5, p. 379.

⁶ *Briefe*, 5, p. 372.

⁷ *Werke*, Weim. ed., 19, p. 263.

⁸ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 60, p. 106.

⁹ Mathesius, *Tischreden*, ed. Kröker, p. 307.

In the preface to the 1545 edition of the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, looking back on the past, Luther writes : "Like St. Augustine I am among those who make progress as they write and teach." Progress he made even though his principles remained the same. Doctrines once implicit became explicit.

On March 26, 1545, Luther published his *Wider das Bapstum zu Rom von Teuffel Gestiftt* : the title sufficiently vindicates the spirit in which it was written. The papacy was to him the Scarlet Woman, and he saw red when he thought of this institution. The whole plan of Paul III in holding his Council seemed to Luther intended to infuse life into a moribund body. The Pope had then sent the Emperor two briefs urging him in general to avoid making concessions to the Lutherans, and in particular to refuse his consent to a German National Council, a project as dear to Luther as a patriot as it was to him as a reformer. His movement was every whit as national as the Swiss or the English. His Elector, through Chancellor Brück, begged "that the said Martin may deal with the Pope's writings . . . for we entertain no doubt that he is well qualified to perform this service."¹ Luther's natural ire was roused at the idea of the popes styling themselves the heads of Christendom. He examines their claim that none had the right to judge or to depose them, and he dissects the story that the popes were the instruments by which the Greeks handed over the Roman Empire to the Germans. His fervent patriotism is insulted by such a tale. His language is not that of an historian, but that of a feverishly excited partisan. If he were the Emperor he would bind together all the blaspheming knaves, popes, cardinals, and all the rest of them, and take them down to Ostia, where there is "a tiny expanse of water called in Latin the *Mare Tyrrhenium*. . . . Into it I would drop them and give them a good bath, along with the keys with which they bind and loose everything. . . . And, lastly, as refreshing food and drink they might have all the decrees, decretals, bulls, indulgences, etc."² The theological and patriotic motives in his mind are clearly perceptible. The Pope is the head of the Church ; he is also a "murderer of kings and an inciter to all kinds of bloodshed."³ "See and behold how my blood boils. How it longs to see the papacy punished, though I know full well that no temporary penalty can atone, even for one single bull or decree."⁴

¹ *Corp. Reform.*, p. 655, n. 3118.

² *Werke*, Erl. ed., 26², p. 229.

³ *Werke*, Erl. ed., 26², p. 230.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

Down to the year 1525 there is no difficulty in quoting many statements of Luther on behalf of toleration.¹ *The Babylonian Captivity* and *The Freedom of a Christian Man* are as clear on this matter in 1520 as even the book *On the Secular Power* is in 1523.² His strong prejudices against the papacy were a reactionary element: so, too, were the Anabaptists, who imperilled the safety of his Church.³ The Saxon Visitation Articles bear witness to his changed attitude, though in 1528, and in part of 1533, he returns to his early attitude.⁴ The example of the kings of Judah and Israel began to weigh with him, and the alteration in tone is evident in his commentary in 1530 on Psalm lxxxii. The *Memorandum* of this year shows the direction in which he is moving, but the remarks appended to his signature prove that he is not altogether convinced, and exactly the same remark applies to the *Memoranda* of 1536.

It would seem as if Luther was unable to remove the deep impression the Parable of the Good Seed and the Tares left upon him. It was often in his thoughts before and after his famous sermon of 1528. On February 7, 1546, he returned to this parable, preaching a sermon at Eisleben on it.⁵ Much of it is directed to the passions Christ must eradicate from their hearts. He has no belief in "a Church in which there is no evil, in which all are prudent and pious, pure and holy." How were men to suffer the heretics and yet not to tolerate them? If he tears up or roots out the tares in one place then he spoils the wheat, and "if I root out one heretic, yet the same devil-sown seed springs up again in ten other places." Violence and

¹ Contrast Barge, 2, 138, 187; Döllinger, *Kirche und Kirchen*, 50 ff., 68; H. Hermelink, *Der Toleranzgedanke im Reformationszeitalter*, 49, 66; Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3⁴, 816; L. Keller, *Die Reformation und die älteren Reformationsparteien*, 446; W. Köhler, *Reformation und Ketzerprozess*, 23, 25 ff., 29, 38; and his *Katholizismus und Reformation*, 52 ff.; Neander, *Das Eine und Mannigfaltige des christl. Lebens*, 224; W. Maurenbrecher, *Studien und Skizzen*, 20; Paulus, 314; K. Rieker, *Die rechtliche Stellung der evangel. Kirche in Deutschlands*, 90; W. Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens*, 123 ff., 125, 126 ff.; and his *Die Inquisition*, 6 ff., 69, 70 ff.

² Cf. P. Drews, *Entsprach das Staatskirchentum dem Ideale Luthers?* 92; Bezold, *Gesch. der deutschen Ref.*, 563; Paulsen, 1², 212; Paulus, 32, 35, 123; F. L. Heyd, *Ulrich, Herzog zu Württemberg*, 3, 172; Sehling, *Die evangel. Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrh.*, I, 1, 142, 175-6.

³ Paulus, 29, 31-2, 41 ff., 311, 314, 316-7; Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens und des Landgrafen Philipp von Hessen zur Täuferbewegung*, 4, 12, 36, 37 ff., 83 ff., 85, 155, 164, 204, 234, 242; and his *Inquisition und Ketzerprozess in Zwickau zur Reformationszeit*, 28 ff., 70 ff., 96 ff.

⁴ Cf. C. E. Förstemann, *Liber Decanorum facultatis theol. acad. Vitebergensis*, 152 ff.; Paulus, 39, 49; Wappler, *Die Stellung Kursachsens*, 155, 156, 233, 234.

⁵ Erl. ed., 20², p. 555 ff.

suppression merely increase the tares. There will be Roman Catholics and Jews to the end of the world. There is no hope of separating the heretic from the believer, the false Christ from the true. "Heretics and seditious men"—this coupling is significant—"like Münzer may grumble, if they please, in a corner: they must not get into the pulpit." "By human power and might we cannot root them out or change them." Still they must not bear rule in the Church. What action are we to pursue against kindred tares, the Roman Catholics and sophists of Cologne, Louvain, and other places? It is with them as with boils: "Let them swell until they burst. This holds good in secular and domestic government. When we cannot get rid of the wicked without harm or loss, then we must put up with them until the time is ripe." According to the parable this time will be the end of the world, and there Luther leaves the matter. On February 18, 1546, he passed away.

A clear parallel exists between the monk of Erfurt and the squire of Schönhausen. Luther and Bismarck were strong in body and determined in mind. The pleasures of the table appealed to each of them. Irrepressible energy and overmastering will-power were their common possessions. Their tongue was as rough as their appearance: though bluntness and coarseness in speech form characteristics of each, the *Tischreden* of the one are as notable as the *Gespräche* of the other. Many questions could not be settled by either Church Council or Parliamentary Reichstag. These were solved over the wine of Luther's social gatherings and over the beer and smoke of Bismarck's parliamentary breakfasts. The conversations of the former and the speeches of the latter contain not a few sayings which have passed into the speech of the country. The writings of each possess the simplicity, the directness, and the turn of phrase observable in such men of action as Cæsar or Wellington or Lincoln. Humility and meekness are among the Beatitudes, but these gifts were despised by the monk and the Junker alike. Both were liable to spells of melancholia and fits of superstition. Both possessed devoted wives and found in their family circle a solace from their cares. Both loved the sights and the sounds of nature.

In their weaknesses, as in their strength, they resembled each other. They disliked the Jews with an intensity difficult for us to understand. They clung to the old order, for Luther as little liked the new merchant as Bismarck the new shipmaster. The one cared as little for the Fugger merchants as the other for

those of Berlin.¹ Their strength lay in the power of the prince, who governed as well as reigned. As the one expelled Rome from Germany, so the other expelled Austria. In their task the head of Bismarck was the cooler, the heart of Luther the warmer. As the one conferred religious liberty on his countrymen, so the other conferred—for a time at least—political unity. For, in spite of the deeds of devastation wrought by Wilhelm II, no student of history can ignore the noble share taken by the House of Hohenzollern in the diffusion of toleration: it is—in the past—the fairest of its titles to the gratitude of mankind. Luther and Bismarck possessed the gift of winning the devotion of friends and followers, and their extraordinary powers of work turned this devotion to account. In the words of Sir Walter Raleigh, they could toil terribly. They believed in government for the people, but not by the people; they were persuaded that their work enjoyed Divine protection, that they had Divine commands for their deeds. But was their conscience² not their guide but their accomplice? They believed in the mass of mankind when the mass believed in them—but not for a moment longer. Both were anxious to influence the people, the one by his pamphlets, the other by his newspapers. Just as Luther tried to crush the peasants, Bismarck tried to crush the Socialists. As Luther in 1525, by his pamphlets against the peasants, became the involuntary and unwilling instrument of political revolution, so Bismarck in 1875, by adopting Protectionism, became the involuntary and unwilling instrument of social revolution.

With Luther man exists for God, with Bismarck man exists for the State, but this State is theocratic. If progress is synonymous with democracy, then both were reactionaries. Cavour, be it remembered, was progressive without being democratic. As Luther created a new form of ecclesiastical organization, so Bismarck created a new form of Empire. The early outlook of the two men was narrow, though it widened with the passing of the years. Beneath their German roughness lay the strength of genius. Bismarck as little foresaw

¹ On Luther's attitude to the modern world cf. Denifle, *Luther und Luther-tum*, I, 689; I², 723; W. Herrmann, *Zeitschrift für Theol. und Kirche* (18, 1908), 74 ff., 147 ff.; G. Kawerau, *Theolog. Literaturztg.* (1884), 37 ff.; P. M. Rade, *Christliche Welt* (1904, No. 26); and, above all, Troeltsch, *Die Bedeutung des Protestantismus für die Entstehung der modernen Welt* (*Histor. Zeitschrift*, 97), I ff.; and his *Kultur der Gegenwart*, I, 4, 397.

² On Luther's conscience cf. W. Walther, *Die christliche Sittlichkeit nach Luther*, 31; K. Stange, *Die ältesten ethischen Disputationen Luthers*, VII; Paulsen, *Gesch. des gelehrten Unterrichts*, I², 174; Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 3¹, 824.

what form his unity—federal, monarchical, or republican—would assume as Luther foresaw the creation of his State-Church. Making allowance for the different ages in which the lot of each was cast, both were essentially feudal in their conceptions, believing in the dependence of class on class by a graduated scale. Status, not contract, was their ideal: the authority of the expert was to settle questions in dispute. What concern had *hoi polloi* with them? Judged, however, by the standard of the centuries in which they lived, there is much to choose between them. Could they have changed the age in which they lived, Luther would have been far more tolerant than Bismarck, and Bismarck would have fallen much below the standard Luther attained. For Luther was the prophet of a Revolution, Bismarck the statesman of a counter-Revolution. They were opportunists of the first rank, akin to Cæsar, Cromwell, or Napoleon. Though Luther was as opportunist as Bismarck, he lacked the prince's power in seizing opportunities fully when they occurred and, above all, in creating them at the exact time required. The two men conceived vast purposes, they knew how to carry them out, and they allowed events to shape and even control their course to its destined goal. It was a favourite saying of Bismarck that "you cannot regulate a current, much less attempt to go against it, that at most you may succeed in steering carefully with it." Both manifested the same readiness to vary, with every change of circumstance, the mode of pursuit of his end.

With both the *fortiter in re* is more evident than the *suaviter in modo*. Fear they inspired in others, but fear itself they did not know. Charm as well as force, however, is required for the success of a policy. Luther possessed force with charm, Bismarck force without charm. The former left as deep an impression on the Germany of the sixteenth as the latter on the Germany of the nineteenth century. In the end both longed to leave the scene of their labours. In 1544 Luther exclaimed: "I am sick of life, if this life can be called life. . . . Fierce hatred and fierce strife among the great . . . no hope of improvement . . . the age is Satan's own." In 1877 by his fireside Bismarck reflected on his past in tones of poignant regret. A friend present assured him that he had at least secured the happiness of a great nation. He shook his head, sadly replying: "Yes, but at the cost of the misery of so many people! But for me three great wars would never have taken place, 80,000 men would not have perished: fathers, mothers, sisters, and wives would not have been plunged into mourning. . . .

I have to settle with my God for that. But I have reaped but little joy from my achievements ; nothing but trouble, disquiet, and chagrin." Often the statesman expressed this deep regret for the outcome of his labour. Hamlet put the whole thought with incomparable force :

*How weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world.
Fie on't ! ah fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed, things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.*

Yet is this philosophy true ? The work of Luther lay in the logic of events, and much of it is of permanent value. There is a powerful brain, a courageous spirit in Bismarck. On the other hand, there is a lofty idealism, a human sympathy in Luther which is utterly lacking in the nineteenth-century statesman. We are still too near the results of the policy of Bismarck to judge adequately of its merits and demerits. The disastrous end of the war of 1914-8 for Germany makes us pause when we desire to anticipate the verdict of history. A small altar stands on the right of the porch of Bismarck's mausoleum. It bears an inscription from Colossians iii. 23 : " And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men." It was the text chosen by Schleiermacher for the sermon he preached when Bismarck was confirmed, and the heartiness of the service of Luther and Bismarck is beyond the reach of any cavil.

It is true that Luther and Calvin were as essentially undemocratic in their outlook on government as the German statesman. It is true that the German reformer was as much the friend of princely rule as the French was of aristocratic. Is this the whole truth ? Is not the faith of a genius greater than he is ? Is not his faith of wider scope than he is aware ? Has it not ramifications of which he never dreamt ?

That Luther favoured toleration before 1525 is just as true as that after 1525 he on the whole favoured intolerance. Can we not charge him with a hostile attitude to the freedom of opinion ? There is some truth in this charge, though we must not overlook the fact that after 1525 he repeatedly advocated toleration. This forms a part answer. The real answer is that even if he had always been intolerant his principles, in spite of him, made toleration one day possible. He was forced to deny the authority of the Pope. When one form of authority is attacked, logically other forms are also open to attack. On historical grounds Luther saw that the *Donation* of Lorenzo

Valla undermined the foundations of papal rule. Once he saw the falsity of the Forged Decretals he saw the falsity of much else, and he could not prevent other men seeing falsity or fallacy in his own system. History proved a potent weapon in his warfare with Rome, and it was one day to prove just as potent in the warfare with Wittenberg. Once the Pope proclaimed himself head of the Church by right Divine, the Emperor must proclaim himself head of the Holy Roman Empire by right Divine. Neither foresaw that when two Divine rights collided, not one but both must give way to force. Luther disputed the Divine right of the Pope and supported that of the King. "It is from the Pope," he held, "I tear the sword, not from the Emperor." He was wrong. His followers disputed the Divine right of the King and supported that of the people. For *vox populi* was one day to be regarded as *vox Dei*.

Did Luther at first foresee the direction his movement was taking? Of course he no more foresaw it than Erasmus foresaw the course his movement was taking. The moment he foresaw it, he, like Erasmus, shrank from its consequences. The attack on the Pope led to the Anabaptist outbreak. When Luther perceived that his teaching endangered the safety of the State, the security of his Church, he on the spot disavowed it. In spite of his disavowal, the consequences remained. What the German Puritan tried to accomplish in 1525 the English Puritans began to accomplish in 1625 when Charles I ascended the throne. What the English began to accomplish in 1625 the Americans imitated in 1776, and the French in 1789. There are many links in the chain of causation, and the first was forged by Luther when he announced his doctrine of free inquiry. Julius II remarked of Michael Angelo, "He is terrible, I cannot live with him," but he could not live without him. Luther was terrible, and the spirit of toleration found it hard to live with him, but it could not live without him.

The second link was forged when Martin Luther rediscovered the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity. Immediately the believers became popes with the infallible Word of God in their hand. How could the reformer debar them from a voice in the State when he allowed a child of nine a voice in the Church? For if they were fitted to be entrusted with eternal affairs, were they not fitted to be entrusted with temporal? As the doctrine of justification by faith bestowed free pardon on believers, their God was their Father. Since He was not a despot, their king could not be one. How could the great revolutionary allow the sovereignty of conscience and

refuse his followers all share in the sovereignty of their country? This plea came with special force to one who had founded his claims as much on national as on religious grounds. No doubt the infant Church of the sixteenth, like that of the first century, remained in a condition of subservience to the ruler. The Church, however, of 325 was no more the Church of 125 than the Church of 1725 was that of 1525. The day which saw the slave and the master signify their membership of the Body of Christ by kneeling side by side, to partake of the rite of Holy Communion, witnessed the beginning of the movement which mitigated the condition of the serf, and in the end emancipated him. The day which saw the peasant and his lord aware of their common priesthood, witnessed the beginning of the movement which one day was to give to the former a share in the government of their common country. After the massacre of Vassy, Theodore Beza, alluding to a current proverb, remarked significantly to Antony, the King of Navarre, "Sire, it is in truth the lot of the Church of God, in whose name I speak, to suffer blows and not to return them. Yet I also take leave to remind you she is the anvil that has employed many hammers." If the hammer of the absolute pope ceased to be wielded, the same fate awaited the hammer of the absolute prince.

As the congregation was sovereign in form, it might become—and did become—sovereign in substance. As the faithful received religious liberty, they went on to claim political. There is only one liberty, and it is liberty of conscience. All other forms of liberty are its offspring. "Quand on commence à douter en religion," Chateaubriand acutely points out, "on doute en politique. L'homme qui cherche les fondements de son culte ne tarde pas à s'enquérir des principes de son gouvernement. Quand l'esprit demande à être libre, le corps aussi veut l'être. Cela est une conséquence toute naturelle." Free religious and free political life are inseparable. There is not a real break in the line of political thought from the *Franco-Gallia* of Hotman to the Declaration of Independence of 1776. As the one proclaimed the political liberty of the French of the sixteenth century, so the other proclaimed the political liberty of the American of the eighteenth. The line of succession runs from Martin Luther to John Calvin, from John Calvin to Hubert Languet, from Hubert Languet to John Knox, from John Knox to John Milton, from John Milton to John Locke, and from John Locke to Alexander Hamilton.

For the success of the cause of toleration two types of men

are required. One must possess the qualities required for the maintenance of order, the other those adapted for steady strong movement. The meditative, questioning type prepares the path for the dogmatic destroyer. There was an age of counsel, the age of Erasmus. There was an age of execution, the age of Luther. "In counsel," Bacon remarks, "it is good to see dangers, and in execution not to see them, except they be very great." There was a day for the patience, the learning and the conservatism of Erasmus. There was also a day for the impatience, the ignorance, and the revolutionary spirit of Luther. Erasmus will be remembered for what he was, and Luther for what he did. The scholar understood man, but not men. The reformer understood men, but not man.

The humanist never possessed office: power he always possessed. In his own day we feel tempted to say of him what Joseph II said of himself, "Here lies a man who never succeeded in anything he attempted." The vehemence of the monk achieved more than the cautious moderation of the scholar. Yet though Erasmus laboured for his own day, he also laboured for the generations to come. And we have entered into his labours. Ours is the far-off fruit of his unwearied diligence, his determination to ascend to the sources, his invincible belief in his method.

Talent de faire bien was the motto chosen by Prince Henry of Portugal, the Father of Navigation and the Patron of Navigators.¹ Erasmus possessed the wish to do well²: Luther translated it into action. Both men pondered a text pregnant with meaning: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Their attitude to it marked the difference between the characters of the two men. In the long run, however, progress is more real and more secure when it is built on the Erasmian than when it is built on the Lutheran plan. Witness the results of the former of which its author never dreamed. He

¹ In the fifteenth century *talent* meant "wish" or "will."

² For a severe condemnation of Scipio Æmilianus, and with him of all other moderates, cf. Greenidge, *History of Rome*, vol. ii: "Of all political temperaments that of the moderates is the least forgiven, just because it is the most timorous. He sees the gulf that yawns at his own feet; he lacks the courage to take the leap, and sets up his own halting attitude, of which he is secretly ashamed, as the correct demeanour for all sensible and patriotic men. The conservative can appreciate the efforts of the radical, for each is ennobled by the pursuit of the impossible, but the man of half measures and intermediate aims, while condemning both, will find the reaction from violent change a more potent sentiment even than his disgust at corrupt immobility."

little thought that his classical studies would one day lead the way to the knowledge of languages older than Greek, revealing secrets as to the beginning of religion long before the belief of Israel. Perhaps he would be dismayed and distressed could he have had a vision of the achievements of either the higher critics or the workers at comparative religion. It is well that consequences are hidden from us. The freedom of opinion, the right of discussion, the toleration of diverse views would never have been wrought out if either Erasmus or Luther could have foreseen the long result of time.

The figure of Erasmus is as forlorn and pathetic as that of Louis Aleman at the Council of Bâle. With eyes turned to the past Erasmus believed he was preparing for that future which the influx of his own moderate ideas and the secularization of life, which Luther effected, shattered. The scholar fixed his hopes for the welfare of Christendom on the meeting of a Council. The conciliar movement had failed in the past and was destined to fail in the future. The growing force of nationality proved too much for any hope of its success. This Council he meant to be not only a controlling, but a governing, body. How could such an assembly devise legislative, executive, and judicial machinery? A General Council had been held on the very eve of the Reformation; it was a failure as all its predecessors had been. When Julius II convoked it in 1512, men understood that this was a shrewd move in the game of controlling his opponents. It sat for five years, and what had it accomplished? Was Pico della Mirandola wrong in telling the Pope that if there was any real desire for reform, the old laws of the Church would suffice without enacting new ones? Had he not begged the Pope and the assembled Fathers to reform morals? Had there been any result of this remarkable speech? The labours of the fifth Lateran Council had not been altogether fruitless. It had achieved the abolition of the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, the charter of liberties of the Gallican Church. It had confirmed the Bull *Unam Sanctam*, in which Boniface VIII had declared the salvation of men to depend on their submission to the Papal See. It had forbidden, under pain of excommunication and heavy fines, the printing of any books without the approval of the Bishop and the Inquisitor, and in Rome of the Cardinal-Vicar and the Master of the Palace.¹

¹ Bull, V, p. 625 ff. Cf. Reusch, *Index*, I, p. 55 ff.; Lea, 3, p. 614; Hausmann, *Päpstl. Reservatfälle*, p. 113; Fessler, *Kirchl. Bücherverbot*, p. 51 ff.; *ibid.*, *Schriften*, p. 149 ff.

In the day of Erasmus the papacy was a strong, centralized, administrative system. Absolutism triumphed first of all in the Church. The conflict between Erasmus and his enemies was the same as that in which the whole of Europe, with the fortunate exception of England, ultimately accepted the absolute monarchies of the seventeenth century. Erasmus fought for the control of the Council, and promoted the cause of the modern State. Luther fought for the freedom of his own Church, and no less promoted the cause of the modern State. The dreams of Erasmus were noble, but they were those of a vanishing world. The dreams of Luther were less noble, but they were those of the modern world.

Luther and Erasmus appealed to the Bible, and this appeal was the soul of the Reformation. The Reformers are, therefore, the harbingers of freedom of thought, though they never meant to be. Theirs is neither the first nor the last movement in which the doctrine of a body and the tendencies of the same body differ by worlds. The Jesuits at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century maintained far more democratic doctrines than the French reformers, but can any one hold that Jesuitism is anything but autocratic? Similarly in the theological controversy between the Jesuits and the Jansenists the former held far more reasonable and more liberal views than the latter, yet who doubts that at bottom Jansenism was a movement making for freedom? At the same time we must bear in mind that the movement of Erasmus and Luther made its impression through the Bible. The Renaissance left the people untouched: the Reformation touched them deeply. In the former movement the Italian people, for example, were scarcely affected by Raphael or Michael Angelo, by Machiavelli or Aretin, by Cæsar Borgia or Vittoria Colonna, by Leonardo da Vinci or Pico della Mirandola.

No one can study the Renaissance and the Reformation without seeing that Erasmus came a generation too soon, whereas Luther arrived at the exact moment: there was the man and he came at the right time. The training of Erasmus, his scholarship, and his genius seemed to acclaim him as the man who would advance freedom of discussion. Luther was incalculable, concentrated, forceful, autocratic, infallible. Nothing is more pathetic than the experience of Erasmus, who arrived too soon. He dreamt in 1520 of a Council which might avert the dangers of a schism. Paul III was about to realize his dream in 1536, the year of his death, when it was too late. In the course of the disputes of a generation the loose beliefs

of 1520 had been crystallized into dogmatic hardness in 1536. The new body, like the old, had its apostles and martyrs, and their blood watered it abundantly. The counsel of Erasmus seemed madness in 1520 : it was elementary wisdom in 1536. Had Luther arrived a generation later, his work would have possessed no interest for the scholars. They had then concentrated on manuscripts in Italy, leaving moral questions largely to the one side, whereas after the Council of Trent such questions would no longer have fascinated them. Nothing would have been more ironical than the effort of the reformer who arrived too late, for whom there was an audience yesterday, for whose cause there was an opportunity ; but now the audience has dispersed, and the field is taken ; he has missed his tide and another will not come.

The Renaissance and the Reformation parted company when Luther abased reason and liberty, when he denied the free will of man, when he insisted that he was not a co-operator with God. The humanists, with Zwingli and Melancthon, wanted a synthesis. Luther provided them with a dualism. Progress, though he nowhere clearly formulates it, is possible with Erasmus : progress, though he formulates it, is not nearly so possible with Luther. In 1520 Luther profited by the floating character of his aims. The humanists, except a few like Erasmus, saw that he spoke their language, breathed their ideas, and fought their enemies. The difference in accent was not yet perceptible. Northern humanists, unlike Italian, led men back to the Bible or the Fathers. Luther led them back to the Bible and to one Father, St. Austin. Humanists threw aside scholasticism : so did Luther. They concentrated their attention on the relations of God and man : was not Luther engaged in the same task when he proclaimed justification by faith ? They desired a religion of the soul in which conscience replaced external constraint : did not Luther proclaim the freedom of a Christian man ? Were men mystics ? So, too, was Luther.

Had Luther never lived, had Erasmus lived a generation or half a generation later, would he have been able to direct a gradual reform of the Church ? It is doubtful. Erasmus had no driving force, no power to compel men to accept his fine ideas. He was the champion of liberty and reform, but it was liberty and reform within the Church. He meant to dispossess neither the pope nor the papacy : above all, he loved unity and loathed schism. The scholars of his own day appealed to him just as doubtless he would have appealed to those of a later day, the

Ronsards, the Montaignes, the Bacons. He undertook much in the field of learning and attained marvellous success. He undertook much in the field of reform and attained no less marvellous failure. Rome flattered him : Rome never feared him, and wholesome fear would have contributed much to the advantage of the cause he had so much at heart.

Comparing him with Luther, it seems impossible to assert that Erasmus was an even greater revolutionary. Yet so it is. At first sight the reformer appears to have brought about a far more momentous change than his contemporary. Erasmus, however, so entered into the spirit of the mediæval Church that he laid its innermost recesses bare, exposing the very springs of its life. He made the soul of the Church visible, and the body was then ready to disappear. The body perishes and, like the phoenix, requires to be remade. The attack of Luther in the end bestowed more vigour on the Church of Rome, for the reform effected by the Council of Trent is as much the work of Luther as the Church he changed. A system can sustain assault from without : it cannot nearly so easily sustain attack from within, and assault or explanation from within was the rôle of Erasmus. The voice of God is not alone in the storm-wind or the earthquake or the fire of a Luther ; it is in the still, quiet utterance of an Erasmus. He understood, he appreciated the mediæval Church as no one except perhaps Dante had understood and appreciated her. His understanding and his appreciation revealed her innermost principle. His insight proved that he, and men like him, had outgrown the forms of this principle, and that it was ready to enter into fresh forms of life and thought. A knowledge of the limits of a principle, to use Hegelian language, takes us, as it were, beyond the principle. Adequate comprehension of a principle also takes us beyond it, liberating it from the accidents of its temporary embodiment. So it was with Erasmus. His mind had outgrown the old mould, and his method of scholarship prepared the new one. No one saw more clearly than he the ideal of mediæval Catholicism, and no one saw more plainly how far the actual fell below the ideal. He judged the Church by the ideal standard he set before her, and tried by that standard she proved signally wanting. Insight is his mark, not foresight. He expressed the conditions by which the real might approach his ideal, and the immediate practical proposal turned out to be the meeting of a General Council. The statement of this condition is sufficient to prove its futility.

The tragedy was that Erasmus possessed no gifts for practical

leadership. The action of Luther at the moment attained more than was accomplished by his rival's balance of acumen and learning. All causes require a champion, a martyr, and a seer. Luther was a champion and he possessed the spirit of martyrdom: the quality of seership was largely denied him. Erasmus was a champion without a trace of the heroic spirit. He, however, possessed in no mean degree the gifts of seership. He had sceptical acumen, he had military loyalty to his method, and this combination was one that left him a puzzle at the moment, but a permanent force of the future. For any great cause there is needed the champion of the past—and the past is the seed-plot of the present and the future: there is also needed the martyr to the exigencies of the present, often in conflict with the past; and there is also needed the prophetic soul. Erasmus possessed two of these great gifts, and it is by virtue of their possession that his is an influence which grows from more to more. He brought from heaven to earth a fresh sense of the relation of man to the unseen.¹

The circumstances of the Holy Roman Empire were at least as important as was the character of Luther, though on his personal influence too much stress can scarcely be laid. It is easy to show that the change he began wore as many colours as the chameleon. It was princely in Germany, it was conservative in England, and it was democratic in Switzerland. This means in reality no more than the fact that the circumstances of each country modified its outward form. It wore an authoritative form in Germany, because Luther was as much obliged to fall back on the princely classes as the primitive Church was forced to adapt itself to the necessities of the Empire. Whatever charge lies heavy on the memory of the reformer lies at least as heavy on the bishops who consented to give Constantine so much power. It wore a conservative form in England because the Reformation made a special appeal to a class new on a large scale, the middle-class merchants. It wore a democratic form in Switzerland because opposition to the might of Austria concentrated strength in the hands of the people. At every step there was authority in the foreground or the background.

In his appeal to the nobility of Germany the reformer shows himself conscious of the nascent force of nationality. It was a feeling far removed from the cosmopolitanism of Erasmus. One reason for the alienation of Luther from the

¹ The preceding two paragraphs owe much to conversations with the Right Hon. G. Wyndham during the year 1904.

humanists was what he regarded as their de-Germanization. They were so proud of their Latin and Greek that they were ashamed of anything typically German. Their change in name was symbolic of much else. A Peter Eberbach became a Peterjus, a Fischer a Piscator, a Johann Jäger first a Venator and then a Crotus Rubianus, a Schuster a Sutor or a Sutorius, a Köpflein a Capito, a Burkardt a Spalatinus, a Beat Bild a Beatus Rhenanus. From the beginning Martin Luther is a German, and when troubles crowd round him it is to his German fellow-countrymen he appeals for succour. Why should the Court of Rome try him? Why should not his own Court of Saxony try him? Why should he not be proud of his fatherland? The Emperor towers over all the heroes of antiquity, over Scipio, over Achilles, and over Alexander himself: no one has been so powerful since Charles the Great as Maximilian. What astronomer or what geographer is equal either to Regiomontanus or to Conrad Peutinger? What philologist is worthy of comparison with Reuchlin? There used to be scholars in the south: they are now in the north. Italy refound classical antiquity: Germany refound classical antiquity and God. German humanism is as national as French, and is both moral and religious. Luther does not stand alone religiously or politically. He has princes and people, lords and citizens behind him. Like the Emperor Henry IV, he began as a revolutionist. An innovator he was, but he was a most reluctant innovator. Like Henry IV, he ended as a conservative. Throughout his career he was, like Mazarin and Cromwell, an opportunist, but at least as consummate an opportunist as either of them. He was essentially a man of action, and his action effected more at the moment, and for generations to come, than the learning and the insight of Erasmus achieved. Only John Calvin or Ignatius Loyola can dispute with him the palm of self-assertion, but it is noticeable that in his self-assertion lurked a deep knowledge of men, especially German men.

Nothing helped the reformer in his early days so much as the knowledge that many patriots believed in him. The condition of the papacy strengthened this feeling enormously. The popes, from Sixtus IV to Leo X, aimed at the creation of papal States, and they were right, from their point of view, to pursue such an aim. For on the possession of such States depended the permanence of the papacy. It gave, however, a fatal advantage to Luther, for he could and did argue that contributions taken from Germany were supporting Italian dreams of

conquest. The College of Cardinals, the Curia, the popes—they were all essentially Italian in their outlook. Since Julius II, with the single exception of the short rule of Adrian VI, all the popes have been Italians. The possession of States placed the popedom in a contradictory position. They were apostles of peace who were constantly forced to go to war in order to defend their property. They were men of the other world and were daily forced to interfere in the affairs of this. A pope like Leo X, a mere man of the world, and a pope like Paul III, one of the ablest not only of his own century but of any century, cared equally for the interests of his children, and were equally mixed up in the interminable negotiations of the Italian States. They spoke exactly as Francis I or Charles V would speak, as if in their family life they were simply actuated by the spirit of Machiavelli. Erasmus was in Rome in 1509, and Luther two years later. They saw, not the head of the Catholic Church, but the head of an Italian State.

Fortunate in many matters, Luther was not least fortunate in the friendship of Philip Melanchthon. Luther himself was immovable in his main convictions, fearless and fierce: he required to be sympathetic in outlook, sensitive, and accommodating. Melanchthon possessed these qualities, and the combination of the two men forms one of the deepest reasons for the success of the movement. No scholar could despise a cause Philip Melanchthon championed. No saint could thrust to the one side a cause which Martin Luther led.

It would have availed Luther little had he lived in France, yet he one time thought of going there. Even Calvin was obliged to leave it. In a centralized country his mission would have encountered hopeless defeat. The decentralization of Germany afforded him the needed opportunity. The discoveries of Columbus and Copernicus acted as the powder-spark in the magazine, strewing rocks on the road from Wittenberg to Rome, and opening the roads to the North Sea, where westward the course of empire was to wend its way. Columbus transformed the earth, Copernicus transformed the heavens, and Luther transformed the rights of conscience. France, Spain, and England are at last national States. In Italy Milan appears as a military duchy, Florence as a business tyranny, and Venice as a commercial oligarchy. Territorial unity gives fresh power to Louis XI, Henry VII, and Ferdinand the Catholic. The new monarchy with the absolute prince appears in all three countries. The King is to be over all Estates of men in his realm, the clergy as well as the people, the Church as much

as the State. The King, in Michelet's striking phrase, is the new Messiah. Gallicanism is not a French doctrine: it is a European one. Between Rome and the people stand a new power, the government of the sovereign. The papacy is henceforth in touch with the princes, not with the masses of mankind.

Between Rome and the people there stands not only the might of the sovereign, but also the Bible. The place of an infallible Church was taken by an infallible Book. The change was gain, but not all pure gain. The Bible belongs to a past age and records many types of civilization. It records principles: it refuses to record maxims for the indolent or for those who like authoritative rules to guide every action of their life. Therefore the reader must interpret it anew in the light of the present. Its truths are unchanged: its aspects are continually changing. That is, its interpretation must vary from age to age. Luther might claim to be its infallible interpreter, but the fact that he felt obliged to rely on it destroyed his claims to infallibility. He asserted the priesthood of the faithful, and this assertion carried with it the right to examine for oneself, regardless of any *Ita scriptum est*. The interpretation of the Bible was left to the ever-varying necessities of the individual. Luther convinced men that the salvation of each soul was dear in the sight of God, and he convinced them that nothing, and no one, must stand between the soul and its Creator. Thereby he effectually got rid of the priesthood in the old sense, and thereby he broke the monopoly of the Church of Rome. The authority of that Church had to be destroyed before toleration could come. It was a conviction of Dr. Johnson that the Devil was the first Whig. The point of the gibe was that the first revolution was attempted by the Devil, who set men the example of resistance to authority. Much as Luther loathed the first Whig, his mode of thought attests his descent from him.

The power of the Church had been laid on a seemingly unshakeable base. The Church is in essence the priesthood, the society of the religious. A pope can tell men that as the moon is to the sun, as matter is to mind, so is the State to the Church. Innocent IV plainly intimates to emperors and kings alike that popes are the representatives of Him who is both priest and king. All men, the Forged Decretals hold, even the princes of the earth, ought to bow the head before the priests. This base has been fundamentally shaken by the view that all the faithful are priests. A papal brief described Mar-

silius of Padua as a "bestia ex abyssu Sathanæ et Inferni sulphureo puteo," because he raised the State above the Church. What he failed to accomplish in the fourteenth century Luther accomplished in the sixteenth. The State is to be governed by natural reason.

The Reformation was an appeal to individual reason against the authority of tradition : it leaves the Church open to revolutions and sects. But, in spite of Bossuet, are not the variations of Protestantism at least as beneficial to mankind as the rigorous orthodoxy and the orthodox rigour of Roman Catholicism ? In the very errors of the Protestant there is an element of liberty, while in the conception of the Infallibility of the Pope there is a principle of slavery. The Reformation allowed conditions that, one day, were to make progress possible.

The scales wherein Erasmus and Luther were weighed in the sixteenth century are broken. The generations to come bring weights and measures of their own. Tried by them, we may confess that if Erasmus rendered a more thoughtful defence of the principle of toleration, Luther in practice ultimately accomplished far more for it. The teaching of the priesthood of the laity was worth all the letters Erasmus ever wrote on the necessity of conciliar reform. Luther was no pathfinder by nature, he was by circumstance. Providence made him a great innovator, but he was at heart a born conservative. He was not the first revolutionary leader, and assuredly he will not be the last, whose success has been crowned by an alliance with another form of the conservative force he had overcome. "Le roi est mort. Vive le roi." The Church is dethroned, the State is enthroned. The enthronement is in keeping with earlier thought, for no writing of either the Renaissance or the Reformation has so fully and so uncompromisingly set forth the supremacy of the State over the Church as the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsilius of Padua.

Bossuet was not wrong in indicating the new domination. What the people gained, said he, in rejecting the pope was to give themselves a lay pope, and to place in the hands of the magistrates the authority of the apostles. That the Reformation aided the cause of despotism is an undoubted fact. Can it be held responsible for the success of that cause ? This is as much found in Roman Catholic countries as in Protestant. Was Philip II of Spain a less absolute ruler than Henry VIII ? In Spain the Church was scarcely less subservient to the State than in Saxony. Indeed, did not Spain owe her success in crushing the movement against absolutism to the close union between the spiritual and

the secular arms? The French Church was every whit as obsequious as the German. It is significant that only two bishoprics, Cambrai and Utrecht, vanish from the map before the Treaty of Westphalia, and both vanish through the action of Charles V.

In discussing the theory of value the political economist lays particular stress on the different effects observable when the period is long and when it is short. Such an application of this theory is sorely required in history. There the effects differ widely according as the period is surveyed from the point of view of one generation or from that of many. After all, *l'histoire, c'est la science de devenir*. The iconoclasts for a short period are the forerunners of Puritanism, for a long they are the precursors of rationalism. The English nobility in the Middle Ages selfishly fought for their own class: such is the judgment of the historian as he surveys a short period. Over the course of the generations we can see that what they gained for themselves ultimately became the inheritance of all. In England, as F. W. Maitland put it, the law for the great men became the law for all men: the King's Court became the Common Law Court. The political husbandman, as Castelar remarked, does not always foresee what manner of crop will be gathered from off the lands that he has digged and sown. It was Kossuth, the revolutionary, who advocated Hungarian autonomy, but it was Deak, the conservative, who realized it. It was republicans who preached the unity of Germany: it was carried through by Bismarck the autocrat. It was they who preached the emancipation of the serf, which a despotic Tsar enacted. It was Mazzini, the conspirator as well as the prophet, who insisted on the unity of Italy: it was Cavour, the calculating statesman, who realized it. It was the extremist Gambetta who played for a republic, which it was the task of the moderate Thiers to make effective.

The Thirty Years' War was as much the outcome of Luther's work as the French Revolution was the outcome of the Edict of Nantes. Toleration is not the child of the reformers, of Luther and Calvin, nevertheless it is the child of the Reformation. The Reformation gave rise to different Churches which exhibited ecclesiastical animosity against one another, and out of this animosity a way had to be found, and that way was toleration. It is the considered judgment of S. R. Gardiner that "as a religious belief for individual men, Calvinism was eminently favourable to the progress of liberty."¹

¹ S. R. Gardiner, *History of England*, vol. i, 1603-7, p. 24.

The necessity of considering the element of time is vital in any survey of the work of Erasmus and Luther. Take a case in Prussian history. It is possible, indeed probable, that the rise of the House of Hohenzollern as a military power dates back to the advent of Frederick the Great in 1740. There was no reason save his own genius why his country should be one of the first-class Powers. The deduction is obvious. The beginnings of the House of Hohenzollern as a military force date from one man, and therefore he is responsible for the present war. This may very well be. But we cannot judge the first act in a play till the curtain has fallen on the last. In real life it is otherwise. We must judge the value of the play line by line, not act by act. That is, we must weigh the purpose in the mind of the man at the time, how far and how wisely he foresaw the future, but we cannot fairly judge him by events happening a hundred and fifty years after his day. Whatever may be the final outcome of the labours of Frederick the Great it is clear that he shook very roughly and very thoroughly such a feudal government as Austria, and such a Jesuit-controlled government as that of France. Kaunitz sought revenge in the Diplomatic Revolution upon England and Prussia for the share they had taken in beating Austria. He failed to arrest the development of Prussia, and he gave England the colonial headship of the world. That is, the question of the middle of the eighteenth century was, Was the policy of the Jesuits to dominate Europe? or, Was the policy of the opponents of the Jesuit powers to dominate Europe? It is true that there have been other results in our day, results among the most calamitous in the history of the human race. Still, as Thomas Fuller remarked on the career of Luther, the horse that wins must gallop beyond the goal.

In Germany and in England new circumstances altered the regime the reformers founded. The work of Luther made possible the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, and no less made possible the Thirty Years' War. The work of Cranmer made possible the Anglican communion, and made no less possible her alliance with the Stuarts, though with the Revolution of 1688 came at last the practical end of intolerance. John Knox is as convinced a believer in the principle of authority as John Calvin: three Marys—Mary Tudor, Mary of Lorraine, and Mary Stuart—forced him to realize in life what he failed to realize in his study. Would the Reformation have succeeded without intolerance? The life of Erasmus suggests an emphatic negative. In order to create, Luther was obliged

to affirm his doctrine of justification by faith, and he was also obliged to impose his affirmations on others.

Luther emancipated men from the yoke of Rome in order that he might place on their shoulders his own. His emancipation, little as he knew it and little as he would have liked it, contained the germ of all emancipation. His claim for the liberty of conscience embraced, in the last resort, all liberty, for all liberty has for its final principle the right of a man to think fearlessly and to express his thought no less fearlessly. He advocated the priesthood of the faithful, thereby making them popes with the Word of God as their guide. He proclaimed the liberty of conscience in his noble plea, *The Freedom of a Christian Man*, in 1520, and in his last sermon on the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares in 1546.

Before he felt the fatal effects of the Peasants' Revolt it is true to say that he was a warm advocate of the principle of toleration. After that date circumstances affected him deeply, and instead of a belief it became a question of opportunism with him. It is tempting to think of him as we do of Carlyle, as if there had been two Luthers. There is the Carlyle we like, and he writes before 1850. There is the Carlyle we dislike, and he writes after that year. Before the dates of 1525 and 1850 respectively there were two writers who belong to the same class as William the Silent, Washington, Cavour, and Lincoln. After these dates there are two writers, but they belong to the class of Strafford, of Frederick the Great, of Napoleon, and of Bismarck.

Luther enclosed the two principles of the priesthood of the laity and of the duty of toleration within a narrow compass, and inevitably they burst through it. Erasmus on the one hand and Luther on the other were the men who supplied the motive and the force in the bursting of the barriers. They were, each in his own way, the supporters of authority, yet they laid down principles which shook it to its very base. They builded better than they knew, runs the old saying. They builded other, far other, than they knew. Theirs was a strange, unforeseen destiny. Nor was it altogether singular. It is clearer perhaps in literature than it is in life. Take an example. Though Dante was a devoted Virgilian, men make of him a romantic. Dante was a convinced supporter of the monarchy of the world, and wrote his *De Monarchia* in order to commemorate the coming of its ruler in Henry VII, yet the supporters of Italian unity passionately invoked his name as the prophet of the national State. Nevertheless, the

instinct was sound, for Dante, just as much as Mazzini or Cavour, eagerly desired to confine the papacy to spiritual matters.

Luther was narrower than Erasmus, and this was a pregnant misfortune for after-generations. The mind, however, which embraces everything overturns nothing. The sovereignty of God was as fundamental to Luther as it was to Calvin. The belief in his Providence stamped upon the Swiss that characteristic which enabled them to maintain their free constitution against the Hapsburgs. It reunited the Seven Provinces of the Low Countries into a body which, at once political and religious, defended itself against the intolerance of Spain. The English, who fled to the Continent on the accession of Mary, returned on the accession of Elizabeth, bringing with them an accentuated belief in the truth of the doctrines for which they had sacrificed so much. In the conflict of the different schools of thought lay the future of toleration. What the French Huguenots failed to obtain the English Independents won. Luther was the father of Roger Williams, of all the men who lived and died in the belief that liberty of opinion was the one matter that gave dignity and worth to life.

Erasmus and Luther had a special task to accomplish in preparing the way for toleration. The one contributed the mind that understands the many-sidedness of truth. The other contributed the energy which shook an intolerant institution to the foundations, founding another just as intolerant. Still, there were two Churches, demanding a conflict of ideals, which was one day to make toleration possible. To Luther was assigned the duty of overthrowing the walls of the old Babylon. To Erasmus was assigned the no less important duty of holding up the framework of the mind to the admiration of the men who were to build the new Jerusalem.

Luther's work led to the development of Anglicanism, which in its turn led to its Puritanism. Puritanism led to emigration to the American colonies in order to escape from the intolerance of Laud, which led to the foundation of the United States. The first formal step in this long evolution was the protest Luther nailed on the Wittenberg Church against the sale of indulgences required by a prince of the House of Hohenzollern, Albert, who at twenty-six was Archbishop of Magdeburg, Archbishop of Mayence, and Primate of Germany. Like Canning, Luther ultimately called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old. For, by a striking nemesis, the citizens of the United States are now coming to the continent of their

forefathers in order to chastise another scion of the House of Hohenzollern, Wilhelm II.

"I now perceive," Voltaire wrote the year before his death, "that we must still wait three or four hundred years. One day it cannot but be that good men win their cause; but before that glorious day arrives how many vexations have we to undergo, how many dark persecutions, without reckoning the La Barres, of whom from time to time they will make *autos de fé*." ¹ There is a divine event towards which the whole world is moving, but it is still far off, still slow coming. For Erasmus the drums never sounded, the banners never fluttered, the cheers of victory never rent the air. A larger measure of success was vouchsafed to Luther. Still, their work was incomplete. In literature the crown of success falls to many. Gibbon is not the only historian to conclude his life's work in such calm detachment that he may meditate upon the last sentence among the acacias in a starlit garden at Lausanne. In life it is otherwise. The thoughts of Luther and of Erasmus must have been bitter when they saw their labours were not destined to completion. What were the last thoughts of Raphael that Good Friday, nearly four hundred years ago, as he gazed at his *Transfiguration*? It is the fate of the worker for the cause of toleration in the sixteenth century that he sees it unfinished. A Luther shatters an old building standing in the way. An Erasmus adds foundation-stones. The centuries have succeeded in raising a stately edifice. Nelson, like Erasmus, never knew that he had shattered the sea-power of France so effectually that it has not been retrieved to this day. Wolfe, on the other hand, like Luther, knew what he had achieved and was glad with his last sigh.

The language of Luther against his opponents is harsh, and his intolerant attitude towards them is at times most pronounced. His words of intolerance are fierce: his deeds of intolerance are few. It is true that he refused the hand of fellowship to Zwingli, and that he believed his defeat at the Battle of Kappel afforded clear proof that God condemned the Swiss reformer's theology. It is true that he implored the Elector John to refuse to tolerate the presence of Hans Mohr, who was teaching Zwinglianism in the Coburg. There is, however, no execution like that of Servetus to be laid to his charge. He allowed the butchery of the peasants, but that was as much because they were a political as a religious danger. There lay before the dissident from Lutheranism the confiscation of his

¹ *Œuvres*, LXXV, p. 267.

church property, the prohibition of his worship, and even exclusion from his native land. No screw twisted his thumb, no iron boot clasped his foot, no faggot burned his flesh, and no axe severed his head. Such a mitigation of punishment is not everything: still in the sixteenth century it is something, and for that something Luther is entitled to credit.

This credit is perhaps all the greater when we reckon that the reformer was face to face with the problems of a decadent society and disintegrating thought. Was toleration compatible with the safety or the security of the Lutheran body? On this point the history of Poland is illuminating. There the reformed Church allowed the proclamation of views by the Calvinists and by the anti-Calvinists, by the Trinitarians and by the anti-Trinitarians. What was the result? It is written in the interminable disputes which wrecked the prospects of the infant Church. The country lost cohesion, and the countrymen the sense of citizenship. The Polish evidence proves that the reformers were tossed about like the sands of the Sahara by the sirocco. Roman Catholicism remained in possession. Minds which turn to everything overturn nothing. Countries which turn to everything overturn nothing.

S. R. Gardiner used to say that the consciousness of strength is a necessary condition of toleration. When a minority is weak it necessarily cannot afford to be tolerant. No doubt Erasmus, like Shaftesbury, in such a case would expose the "enthusiast," the fanatic, to the test not of persecution, but of the graceful raillery of wit and humour. He could echo the words of Goethe's man of learning in the second part of *Faust*:

*Die Gegenwart verführt ins Uebertreiben,
Ich halte mich vor Allem ans Geschreiben.*

The world of thought is not synonymous with the world of action. Is the influence of a man to be limited to his deeds? If so, Burke stands in parlous plight, for he never saw his ideals translated into the clauses of an Act of Parliament. Nevertheless, the dinner-bell of the House of Commons has been a growing sound in the ears of posterity.

Length of days was bestowed upon Erasmus and Luther, and this length lent strong support to the realization of their dreams. It aided Erasmus, though it aided him less than Luther, for the cleavage between scholarship and reform grievously impaired his commanding position. The fame of Shelley and Keats would not have been so slow in securing recognition had they not been cut off in early life. On the

other hand, Luther, like Voltaire and Bentham, like Wordsworth and Ruskin, secured through his comparatively long life the ever-widening diffusion of his doctrine. From 1520 to 1546 was a generation into which the work of several generations was crowded, and during this generation the revolutionary employed those extremely formidable weapons, iteration and reiteration, in order to enforce the truth of justification by faith. The fact that he was a philistine of genius lays bare a secret of his success. For if, according to Walter Bagehot, a statesman is a man of first-rate abilities, with a third-rate manner of expressing them, Luther was a statesman of unsurpassed genius. He was able to think the thoughts of a leader, and he was also able to clothe those thoughts in language which the ordinary man grasped immediately. His success, just as much as Ruskin's, was in part due to his limitations of thought, for large tracts of the world of Erasmus were outside his purview. It was also in part due to his signal gifts as a leader. His followers coveted his personal praise as the one earthly good: he became to them not only a pope, but a deity. Moral power over others such as is seldom sent to the sons of men was sent to him in abundant measure. He was able to drive home his truth with irresistible power. Clear—too clear—vision, great—too great—force, and kindling—too kindling—speech were among the gifts which prospered his cause. Mystical influences, doctrinal influences, and revolutionary influences were all at work in the mind and heart of Martin Luther. The mystical influences remained with him as he meditated upon the writings of the quietist leaders of the past, and he read their works as bedside volumes. Doctrinal influences remained with him largely through the tomes of St. Austin, who dominated him just as much as he himself dominated others. Revolutionary influences remained with him as he dwelt upon the sums of money Rome extracted from the pockets of the Germans, and the spiritual privileges of which Rome deprived them by its defence of the privilege of the priest.¹ What prepossesses Goethe in his favour was his struggle against priestcraft and the hierarchy and his translation of the Bible. "By him we have been emancipated from the fetters of intellectual narrowness."² Frederick the Great respected him as *libertatis cogitandi assertor*.

According to Wieland: "To Oriental literature, he (i.e. Reuchlin) uttered the word of power, Come forth! And the

¹ On the un-Roman attitude cf. Nietzsche, *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, 6, 202.

² Conversations with Eckermann, March 11, 1832.

dead came forth wound round with Rabbinical grave-clothes, and with the napkins of the Cabbala about his head. The second word, the word reserved for the successors of Reuchlin to speak, was far easier, Loose him, and let him go.”¹ Erasmus stands in the same position, though with deeper influence even than Reuchlin’s. Luther stands in the position of Reuchlin’s followers. Some men have been *primi inter pares* in the world of affairs, and some have been *primi inter pares* in the world of scholarship. The striking feature in Erasmus is that to the statesman he was almost *primus inter pares*, and to the learned he was altogether *primus inter pares*. The ascent of the human race is a long process: as with mankind, so is it with man. The realization of the ideal is a tedious process. In a survey of the life of Erasmus there is a feeling of disappointment: he set out to have accomplished so much, and he seems actually to have accomplished so little. In his labour the hours of gloom exceed the hours of insight, yet his hours of insight have been a source of inspiration for men from the sixteenth century to our own day. For their force has not all been spent. “Longum illud tempus,” wrote Cicero, “quum non ero magis me movet quam hoc exiguum.”² In the spirit of these words—and the writer of them was his favourite classical author—Erasmus appealed from the rancour and wrangling of his day to the verdict of time, the daughter of truth.

Neither Pitt nor Peel made an original contribution to political economy. It was reserved for Adam Smith to make such a contribution, and it was reserved for Pitt and Peel to apply it. As Pascal points out, “Qu’on ne dit pas que je n’ai rien dit de nouveau: la disposition des matières est nouvelle.” For originality lies as much in perception of opportunity or fresh disposition of material as in invention. Luther saw, although but dimly, the new world that was looming vaguely along the horizon. The essential point is not that either he or Erasmus saw dimly, but that they saw at all. It is the direction of a man’s outlook that alone matters. Is it true, as Bishop Creighton contends, that if we look to private life a man’s character is more revealed by what he tries to do than by what he succeeds in doing? ³ Is it paradoxical to maintain that the abiding influence of a great man is expressed by his aspirations rather than by his achievement? We firmly believe

¹ Cf. Geiger, 195.

² Cic. Att. XII, 18; Tyrrell and Purser, V, 11; Cf. Soph. Antig. 74.

³ Cf. Robert Browning’s *What I aspired to be*, verses 6, 7, 24 and 25, I, 580.

that this is no paradox, but a plain truth. The most fruitful heritage of the genius of Erasmus or Luther is their attitude to life, their spirit—not always their method—of tolerance. Their work lies not so much in what they did as in what they made possible. So judged, the contribution of Erasmus and Luther to the ultimate solution of the problem of toleration is of high value and deep import.

APPENDIX

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THE CONCEPTION OF PROGRESS IN CLASSICAL AND RENAISSANCE WRITERS

MOST of us to-day are inclined to regard progress as a matter of course. Knowledge expands, we think, and there is no reason why it should not continue to do so indefinitely. This was not so with the Greeks. They, for the most part, conceived on the contrary the possibility of a process of deterioration, a cycle or succession of cycles. The majority thought that there had been a Golden Age, but it is long since past. Moreover, there seems to have been the feeling that this age was distinctly dull. Beyond the "Pillars of Hercules" once existed Plato's "Atlantis": it is now lost to the sight of men in the depths of the sea. In it innocence and happiness reached the highest possible stage: the utmost man can expect is to return, however distantly, to this stage. This view had a great practical value, for it kept men from that fanciful and foolish idealizing which is the curse of the modern world. Similarly there had once been a complete body of knowledge: the past knew far more than the present can ever hope to know. What George Meredith called "the rapture of the forward view" was for the most part denied to the writers. There is, however, a hint of the conception of progress in the introduction to Thucydides (471-396 B.C.), in Herodotus (486-400 B.C.), in the *Prometheus Vincit* of Æschylus (525-456 B.C.), in the speech of Protagoras (480-411 B.C.), in Plato (428-347 B.C.), in the *Physics* of Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), and more than a hint in the *Natural Questions* of Seneca (d. A.D. 65).

In the midst of a conflagration in which civilization is burning, it is easy for us to hold that development includes retrogression. There are many side-currents as well as the main current in the stream of evolution. As Huxley pointed out, "So far from any gradual progress forming any necessary part of the Darwinian creed, it appears to us that it is perfectly consistent with indefinite persistence in one state or with a gradual retrogression. Suppose, for example, a return of the glacial period and a spread of polar climatical conditions over the whole globe."¹ The man of the ancient world no doubt had reasons other than these. He inherited the natural love of mankind for old associa-

¹ *Darwiniana*, pp. 90-1.

tions and he inherited a sense of reverence. The old, simply because it is old, must be better than the new. If he was obliged to strike out a new path he diverged as little as he could from the old and tried one. He also encountered the difficulty of finding a new word for a new thing. He invariably took an old word with fine associations and adapted it to the new sense. It is impossible for a country, especially a primitive one, to effect an entire break with the past. Perhaps the greatest of all breaks with the past was the French Revolution, and yet for its ideals it entertained a return to Roman republican virtue, or to the simplicity of the natural man. Mental philosophers cry "Back to Kant" (1724-1804), and political philosophers cry out, "Back to Aristotle," and some scientists at least, e.g. Lord Kelvin and Sir Gabriel Stokes, cry out, "Back to Newton" (1642-1727).

Through that pessimistic book the *Works and Days* of Hesiod (859 B.C.-c. 824) there breathes the feeling that the youth and glory of the world as it existed in the reign of Kronos has passed away¹; that man has fallen; that the race is not what it was; that existence, once easy, joyous, innocent, has become difficult, pervaded by evil, full of woes. "The land is full of troubles," thinks Hesiod, "and so is the sea."² He provides two explanations of this change for the worse, each inconsistent with the other. One traces the toils and the miseries of life to the box of Pandora and to Prometheus's theft of the fire from heaven.³ Before the coming of Pandora mankind was happy. This explanation reaches Greek literature through Phœnicia, originating in Semitic thought. In the second explanation Hesiod, embracing an idea held among Aryan peoples, emphasizes the gradual deterioration of man through a series of ages.⁴ According to him these ages are the golden, the silver, the bronze, the heroic, and the iron, the present one.⁵ The iron age is a mass of crime, misery, and oppression, representing what Gibbon conceived to be the normal record of history. The golden race attained the dignity of guardian spirits, who walked the earth unseen, presiding over the fates of men.⁶ The silver race survive after death; they, however, exist under the earth, exercising no control over the shafts of destiny. The heroes who fought at Thebes and Troy, when they leave this world, depart to the Islands of the Blest.⁷ The process of the fall is not continuous, though it is evident that Hesiod looked on Hope as a mocking illusion, a view shared by Theognis (c. 570-490 B.C.).⁸

There is an age, named after no metal, better than that which preceded it. Does Hesiod allow this exception in order to make room for

¹ Cf. Plato, *Pol.*, 271 D ff.

² *Works and Days*, 101 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, 42-105, especially 90-100.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 109-201.

⁵ Cf. Ovid, *Mét.*, I, 89-150.

⁶ *Works and Days*, 124 ff., possibly spurious. Cf. Plato, *Rep.*, V, 469 A; Athenag., *Legat. pro Christo*, 21; Porphyry, *Vit. Pyth.*, 384.

⁷ *Works and Days*, 170 ff.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 637-8. Cf. Thuc., II, 62, 5; V, 103. On Elpis and Pandora, cf. Mr. Gow's paper in *Essays . . . presented to W. Ridgeway*, pp. 99-109.

the traditions representing the heroes as the founders of Greek families and cities? This seems to be the reason, and not, as Goettling argues, the belief in the theory of cycles. In the golden days there were no women, for with them evil for the first time visited man. In the reign of Zeus, not of Kronos, Pandora, the mother of all women, was created.¹ Hesiod loudly laments that his lot is cast in the iron age. "Would that I had never lived among the fifth race of men, but had either died before or been born later. For now it is the iron age; nor ever shall they cease from weariness and woe by day, nor from destruction by night: but the gods will send cruel cares. Yet even for them shall good be mixed with evil. But Zeus will destroy even this race of mortals, when men shall have grey hair at their birth." Do these sentences imply that the age of iron will pass away and that a happier era will then dawn? They suggest that there is an event to which the world is moving. The end of the present dispensation will arrive when children come into the world grey-headed. Now Dr. James, in his lecture on the *Revelation of Peter*, quotes a passage showing that among the signs of the end are children whose "appearance shall be as of those advanced in years; for they that are born shall be white-haired."² There are parallels to this thought in Plato, who suggests that in the golden age the scheme of ordinary life is reversed. Men are born old and grey-headed, become middle-aged, youthful, and pass away in childhood.³

The *Works and Days* was, more than Homer, the Bible of the Greeks, the book from which they derived that pessimistic outlook upon life which characterized so many of them. For example, that poor poet Aratus (*flor.* 270 B.C.), an Alexandrian disciple of Hesiod, describes at length the degeneracy of mankind. In the golden age Diké or Astrea wandered about the earth quite freely; in the silver age her visits were fewer, and in the brazen she set out for heaven and became the constellation Virgo. Perhaps Horace (65 B.C.–A.D. 8) had read the passage in which Diké remarks: "What a race the golden sires have left behind them, worse than they were, and your offspring will be baser still."⁴ Hesiod faced the ills of life, believing that they could be endured if we work, not if we hope, for Hope is ever a deceiver. Aratus was persuaded that it was the brazen age that first practised the shedding of blood, thereby violating the Pythagorean command against the eating of flesh.⁵ In the Mysians of his day, who were vegetarians, Posidonius (*c.* 135–*c.* 50 B.C.) saw the descendants of the men of the age of gold.⁶ It is noteworthy that Aratus omits all mention of the Roman agricultural deity, Kronos or Saturn, with whom many writers associated the golden age.

¹ *Works and Days*, 70–89. Cf. Paus., I, 24, 7.

² *The Gospel according to Peter and the Revelation of Peter*: Two Lectures . . . by J. Armitage Robinson and M. R. James, p. 56.

³ Cf. Adam's ed. of Plato's *Rep.*, II, pp. 296–8.

⁴ Ar., *Phænomenon*, II, 123–4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 131–2. Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 391.

⁶ Strabo, VII, 296. Cf. Hesiod, 109–20.

The sadness and the sombreness of Hesiod and Aratus are unmistakable. In the Consolation addressed to Apollonius (*flor.* 4 B.C.), on the death of his son, Plutarch (A.D. c. 50–c. 140) collects passages from the great poets, from Homer downwards, in support of this view of human life.¹ Attention has often been drawn to the strain of melancholy in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. “Surely there is nothing more pitiable than a man among all things that breathe and creep upon the earth.”² “Of all the creatures that breathe and creep upon the earth, man is the feeblest that the earth nourishes.”³ Is there not only one reference in the Homeric poems to the vision of the gods as a moral ideal to man? ⁴ May not death be the deliverer from our present state of misery? ⁵ Do we, as Seneca argued, return to that state of unconsciousness in which we existed before birth? ⁶ Is there the Island of the Blest in the west which Pindar (518–c. 442 B.C.) depicted? ⁷

According to Theognis, “Best it is not to be born; and next best, being born, to die as soon as possible.”⁸ Sophocles (495–406 B.C.) quotes more than once the Greek proverb, “Call no man happy till he dies.”⁹ In the chorus of the *Œdipus at Colonus* he tells us:

Not to be born is past disputing best;
And after this, his lot transcends,
Who, seen on earth for briefest while,
Thither returns from whence he came.¹⁰

Theognis is puzzled because the gods have not revealed to man the road he must take in order to find favour in their eyes.¹¹ Chaos, not cosmos, is visible everywhere, and there is no prospect of redress hereafter. “Small is the strength of man,”¹² declares Simonides of Argos (*flor.* 664 B.C.), “and his cares are irremediable; toil upon toil in life’s brief span, and the shadow of inevitable death hanging over all; for good and bad have equal share in death.” Solon (c. 638–c. 558 B.C.) is not a pessimist, yet even he writes, “No mortal man is happy, but all on whom the sun looks down are miserable.”¹³ Pindar knows that “never hath any one of men upon the earth received from God a sure token of that which shall be hereafter; but the revelations of the future are blind.”¹⁴ “It is impossible,” he confesses, “with mortal minds to discover the purposes of the gods.”¹⁵ To Pindar Hope is false,

¹ *Consol. ad Apoll.*, c. vi, vii ff.

² *Il.*, 17, 446 ff. Cf. 6, 146–9; 24, 525 ff.

Od., 18, 130 ff. Cf. 10, 74.

⁴ *Il.*, 9, 497.

⁵ *Consol. ad Apoll.*, c. xiv. Cf. Seneca, *Ep.*, 102; *De Imitat.*, III, 48, § 1.

⁶ Seneca, *Ep.*, 99, § 30; *Ep.*, 24; *Ep.*, 36.

⁷ Pindar, *Ol.*, II, 68 ff.

⁸ 425 ff. Cf. 877–8; Bacchy., 5, 160 ff.

⁹ O. T., 1529 ff.

¹⁰ 1225 ff., Whitelaw. Cf. *Anth. Pal.*, IX, 111; Euripides, *Frag. Cresphontes*, 452 (Nauck).

¹¹ 381 ff. Cf. 133–42.

¹² Simon, *Amorg. Frag.*, 20 (Bergk).

¹³ Solon, *Frag.*, 13.

¹⁴ Pindar, *Ol.*, 12, 5 ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 12, 61. Cf. Pyth., 8, 92 ff.; 10, 27.

if flattering.¹ According, however, to Simonides of Argos, hope supports man in his vain efforts after the unattainable, though in the meantime old age, desire and death overtake him.²

Æschylus (525-456 B.C.) makes Prometheus say that in a primitive state men had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not. They dwelt in the sunless depths of caves, were ignorant of all the signs of the seasons, and the simplest rudiments of art, pursued all their occupations without discernment, and left their entire life to chance and confusion. Prometheus, on the other hand, taught them to count, to mark the risings and the settings of the stars, the building of houses, the taming of animals, the yoking of horses, the curing of diseases, the navigation of the sea, and the practice of the various modes of divination.³ In the trilogy of Æschylus the thought of progress is never long absent. Their author seizes more of the idea of a great religious and social evolution than most other writers of his time. He believes in a gradual improvement in the religious as well as in the moral condition of the world, as seen in the *Prometheus Vincitus* and the *Eumenides*. Zeus has supplanted the old Titanic powers, but is in his turn to be overthrown by another in the fulness of time. Unfortunately, as the *Prometheus Unbound* is lost, we do not know how he treated this theme of the overthrow of Zeus by one mightier and, we may suppose, better. With the discovery of fire began the control of nature by man: Prometheus was bound for the benefit of the human race. Through him men passed from a mere animal life to an intellectual and social life. By means of fire it was at last possible to utilize what lay hidden in the earth, the brass, the iron, the silver, the gold. The stone age had for ever passed away. To him, as to Virgil⁴ (70-19 B.C.), Zeus, the present King of the Gods, proved a sterner taskmaster than Kronos or Saturn, the ruler of the golden age. Both poets agree with Euripides (480-406 B.C.) and Lucretius (c. 99-55 B.C.) that man is heavily handicapped in his contest with nature. Æschylus indeed presents us with an account of the activities of Zeus, which is one of the glories of Greek literature.

The language Æschylus puts into the mouth of Prometheus is akin to the utterances Euripides ascribes to Theseus in the *Suppliants*.⁵ Euripides tells us of a god who has transformed the conditions of life by making possible the transition from the animal stage to one in which the capacity and the knowledge of man can develop. He does not entertain the Shakespearean belief that "the evil that men do lives after them."⁶ Still he is far more despairing in his outlook than Sophocles (495-406 B.C.) who clings to the belief in the Providential control of our lives. Euripides was never able to attain to what George Eliot pronounced to be the happiest of human states, that in which

¹ *Ol.*, 12, 5; *Nem.*, 11, 45; *Stob.*, 3, 12.

² Simon, *Amorg. Frag.*, 1 (Bergk).

³ Æschylus, *Prom.*, 443-517.

⁴ *Georg.*, 1, 121 ff.

⁵ Euripides, *Supp.*, 201-8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 196-218.

we possess settled religious convictions. Not a little of the sombre tone of the *Hecuba*, the *Andromache*, the *Daughters of Troy*, and *The Madness of Heracles* was prompted by this circumstance. No doubt he lived in an age of social and political revolution, but Sophocles and Socrates (469-399 B.C.) also lived through it. Yet Euripides could write

With tears in mournful throng the new-born babe
'Tis meet we welcome to a life of woe :
But him whom death releases from his toil,
With songs of gladness speed upon his way.¹

Anaximander (610-547 B.C.) assumed the idea of the Infinite, or the Unconditioned, and on the basis of this assumption he put forth a crude form of the nebular hypothesis and of the evolution idea. He assumes that matter is primitive and indeterminate, that there is necessarily in it eternal energy and movement, and that through this energy and movement the two original contraries of heat and cold separate. What is cold falls to the centre and forms the earth. What is hot arises to the circumference and forms the bright fiery bodies of the heavens, which are only fragments of what once existed as a complete sphere. In process of time this sphere burst, forming the stars. The action of the sun's heat on the cold earth generated films or bladders, out of which proceeded different kinds of imperfectly organized beings : they gradually developed into the animals now existing. This is quite unlike Epicurus (342-270 B.C.) and Lucretius, who both imagined animals as arising directly out of the earth, much as Milton's lion long afterwards pawed its way out. The pedigree of man with Anaximander goes back to the fishlike creatures which dwelt originally in muddy waters, and only as the sun slowly dried up the earth did they become by stages fit for life on dry land.² He, however, confines his conception of progress to the evolution of animals and man.³ He holds that there is a plurality of worlds, and according to him one world springs out of another.⁴ This idea is also to be found in Heraclitus of Ephesus (513-c. 473 B.C.), who maintains that out of the universal conflagration will issue a new world, and this process will continue indefinitely.⁵ Nevertheless, in spite of this continual transformation, Heraclitus does not speak of any amelioration in the lot of man. The cardinal fact to him was the ceaseless movement in the universe and the utter hopelessness of it.

The poetic view of Empedocles of Acragas (c. 490-430 B.C.) is not unlike the scientific conception of Anaximander. Empedocles assumes the four elements of earth, air, fire and water. Out of the conflict between Love and Hate emerge plants, animals and man in succession. The greater number of the members of the animals was

¹ *Frag.*, 449. Contrast Euripides, *Herc. Fur.*, 105-6; Dem., *De Cor.*, 97; Theog. 1135-46.

² Plutarch, *De Plac. Phil.*, II, 25; III, 16; V, 19. Cf. Euseb., *Præp. Evang.*, I, 8.

³ Hippolyt., *Ref.*, I, 6; Diels, *Doxographi Græci*, p. 560.

⁴ Simplicius, *Phys.*, 257.

⁵ Aristotle, *De Cælo*, I, 10; 279 B, 12. Cf. Diog. Laert., IX, 8.

generated by chance.¹ After endless efforts on the part of the organs to unite the present shapes are evolved.² Empedocles finds the origin of life in abiogenesis or spontaneous generation: centaurs, chimæras, and other creatures he brings under the operation of this law, though Lucretius suppresses all hint of their existence in his account of the creation.³ In a crude form he lays down the theory of natural selection. Aristotle in his *Physics* is careful to inform the reader that he derived this theory from Empedocles, who merely held the germ of an all-important conception. Strangely enough, the idea of one stage giving origin to another was absent from his thought.

There are traces in Empedocles of the golden age Hesiod shadowed forth. There is progress which, however, is lacking in continuity. Nevertheless both Empedocles and Hesiod hint at a restoration of all things similar to that set forth by the Orphic religion. The former holds that in the course of the inevitable cycle destruction ensues. "Things must all return whence they came according to destiny." He agrees with Anaximander in believing in the fallen condition of mankind. For "thirty thousand seasons" the souls of men were to wander through all the changes of transmigration, plant, bird, fish, beast or human being. Nevertheless his ideal lay in the past. There had been an age of gold, during which Venus reigned as queen.⁴ Then flowers and fruits flourished at all seasons of the year.⁵

A disciple of Pythagoras, Ocellus Lucanus, maintained that everything in this world is in an incessant state of flux. Societies spring up, grow and die, and are replaced by another set of societies, which share exactly the same fate.⁶

Xenophanes (c. 540–c. 500 B.C.) was a traveller who possessed a distinct interest in geology. In a couple of lines he hints that men have progressively made discoveries by their intelligence, have realized the best, thanks to time and the labours of many, for the Gods have neither given nor shown everything at once.⁷

If we understand progress primarily to mean the series of slow successive transformations, infinitesimal ameliorations which, when taking place, change the condition of an individual or a society, then there is scarcely a trace of such a doctrine in Plato (c. 428–347 B.C.). There is perhaps in the second book of the *Republic* and the third book of the *Laws* an outline of an experimental theory of progress. Our world is imperfect. The ideal State is not on earth: it is only to be found in Heaven.⁸ It is the city which the men of old time, who were

¹ *Parts of Animals*, book i.

² Mullach, *Empedoclis Carmina*, 314–6, in *Frag. Philos. Græc.*; Ælian H. A., XVI, 29; Aristotle, *Phy.*, II, 8.

³ Lucret., V, 860.

⁴ *Frag. Philos. Græc.* (ed. Mullach), 417 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 433.

⁶ Cf. Ocellus Lucanus, *De universa natura* (ed. Nogarola), p. 44; Plato, *Rep.*, VIII, 545 C–547 A; Aristotle, *Politics*, III, c. 15.

⁷ Stobæus, *Eclog.*, I, 224.

⁸ *Rep.*, VI, 500 E; IX, 592 B.

nearer to the gods than we, knew.¹ There used to be a happy city which flourished in the reign of Kronos.² Readers of the *Timæus* are familiar with the glowing account of Critias (c. 440-404 B.C.). This ideal city has disappeared; the wisdom of its laws and the beauty of its institutions have alike vanished.³ Now we behold change which is circular: we witness the degradation of the perfection which once existed. Aristocratic government has degenerated into timocracy, into oligarchy, and into democracy which has become tyrannical.⁴ The best to be hoped is a return to the ancient State. The ideal is not before us: it is behind us. The perfect State was immutable: it was a body determined by geometrical arrangement, an organism ruled by fixed laws, developing always in the same circle.

The older Plato grew the greater he saw were the obstacles which were preventing the realization of his perfect State. The early legislators possessed advantages over their degenerate descendants. Were they not of the blood of the gods? Did not they impose their laws upon heroes who were children of the gods?⁵ Wisdom is the only object to which every good legislator ought to direct his laws.⁶ The aim of all sound policy is to ensure the happiness of man.⁷ In the last resort social progress is bound up with individual progress, with the predominance of the immortal part of our being, the triumph of reason.⁸ In this fashion it will be possible to realize the perfection of the long-lost ideal State. Thus we can avoid the return of degeneration when, in the course of circular revolution, the eternal order returns back again upon itself.⁹

Plato, then, from our standpoint, makes a small contribution to our theme. Still it is a fact of enormous significance that the groundwork of modern science, the evolution theory, was laid not by the early naturalists or the speculative writers but by the modern philosophers, by Descartes (A.D. 1596-1650), by Leibniz (A.D. 1646-1716). What Plato failed to accomplish directly he himself accomplished indirectly. He is one of the sources of that spirit of mysticism which tends to merge the particular in the universal, the temporal in the eternal. He is also one of the sources of that idealism which checks the evil side of mysticism, for Plato sought the ideal in the real world, the world of experience. To Plato, as to Aristotle, the State was an end, not a means. Man's ethical life was not possible without the State: apart from it he could be nothing and could do nothing. Therefore neither philosopher could entertain the *general* idea of progress, though Aristotle distinctly entertained *particular* forms it assumed. The ancients did not realize the modern conception of indefinite progress in a *continuous* direction. If

¹ Philebus, 16 C.

² *Politics*, 269 B. Cf. *The Laws*, IX.

³ *Tim.*, 23 C, 24 D.

⁴ *Rep.*, books viii and ix.

⁵ *The Laws*, IX.

⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 688 A.

⁷ *Gorgias*, 515. Cf. 519 A; *Meno*, 99; *The Laws*, IV, 707 D.

⁸ *The Laws*, 713 E-714.

⁹ *Rep.*, VIII, 546 A.

one may use an Irishism, the thought of progress backwards was more familiar to them than progress forwards.

Plato conceived society dynamically : Aristotle conceived it statically. Order to the latter was heaven's first law. To trace the general plan of the evolution of the human race is a task which does not concern him : his is the humbler labour of showing under what conditions the city-State can realize happiness. Its size, its site, its nearness to the sea, its aloofness from the stranger—these are the matters in his mind. His closest approach to the consideration of the ideal is his criticism of the Platonic conception. Has he more than a glimpse of scientific progress when he discusses changes in medicine which have modified the art of healing ?¹ Though he has not the resources of palæontology at his command, he entertains a general conception of the origin of higher species by descent from lower. In his consideration of the factors of evolution it is amazing to note that he discusses the survival of the fittest hypothesis, which he states quite plainly, and dismisses it. His view of the development of life ultimately led to the correct interpretation of the Mosaic account of the creation, and his view St. Austin (A.D. 354-430) cordially accepted. Indeed, if the teaching of the African doctor, in this respect at least, had remained the teaching of the Church, the triumph of the theory of evolution might have been anticipated by centuries.² St. Austin was an observer : Aristotle was a scientific observer. The latter distinguished no less than five hundred species of mammals, birds and fishes. Underlying these and other species he conceived of a single chain of events, which is among the greatest of his achievements : it completely passed out of the ken of man till the middle of the nineteenth century. Nature, he maintains, proceeds constantly by the aid of gradual transitions from the most imperfect to the most perfect, while the numerous analogies we find in the various parts of the animal scale show that all is governed by the same laws. That is, all nature is essentially one in the matter of causation. The ascent is from the inorganic to the organic, and then comes man, who reaches the highest point in one long and continuous process.

Details were in the mind of Aristotle : so too were illuminating principles. He notices the effects of heredity, of the influence of one parent or stock, of atavism, of reversion. In the *Generation of Animals*³ he analyses the heredity theories of Hippocrates (460-357 B.C.) and Heraclitus (513-c. 473 B.C.), which were not unlike those of Democritus (460-361 B.C.). He describes the difference between the vegetable and the animal world, and marks off the organic world from the inorganic. He clearly grasps the principle of adaptation, understanding the physiological division of labour in the different parts of an organism. Life to him is not a separate principle : it is the function of the organism,

¹ *Politics*, VII, 13.

² Cf. *De Trin.*, III, 8, 9 ; IV, 21 ; *De Genes. ad Lit.*, I, 39 ; *De Doct. Christ.*, II, 46.

³ *Generation of Animals*, I, sec. 35.

a view which anticipates the doctrine of epigenesis in embryonic development discovered by Harvey (1578-1657).

How did Aristotle arrive at these notable advances? Unlike Plato, who trusted intuition, he trusted experiment and induction.¹ To a man with his scientific bent it was impossible to believe in the operation of chance. Nothing, he holds, which occurs regularly, can be the result of accident. The adaptation manifest in the world obliged him to believe in an intelligent first cause. This theistic tinge influenced the early Christians, especially St. Austin, and in time the authority of Aristotle in the Mediæval Church was elevated to a position as exalted as that of the Bible itself. The lover of truth must regret that the conquests of Philip (382-336 B.C.) and Alexander (356-323 B.C.) and the loss of national independence checked the love of free physical inquiry, among the Greeks, which promised to be so fruitful. The dynasties founded by Alexander's generals left the city-State a mere pawn in the game of militarism: the all-conquering arm of Rome completed its destruction. In the post-Aristotelian period Francis Bacon is right in thinking that for the ancients moral philosophy supplied the place of religion. The new school of thought is subjective and individualistic. Ethical conceptions replace science. The Stoics or the Epicureans came into possession of the vacant field. The happiness of man was no longer bound up with the welfare of the State. For the first time it became possible to lead a private life: Diogenes (c. 412-323 B.C.) or Aristippus (c. 428-350 B.C.) were no longer singular in their conduct.

The Oriental doctrine of vast chronological cycles forms a fundamental tenet of the Stoic school. With its philosophers the pantheistic notion that God is the creative soul of the world was a commonplace. He is the eternal force which forms and permeates the world, the spirit of ever-acting and living fire, which manifests itself outwardly as matter when its heat declines, and burns up matter when its heat is intense. Zeno (c. 362-264 B.C.), the founder of Stoicism, believed that the world would be reabsorbed into the fiery ether, which is Reason and God. But how could Reason be identified with a material substance which could be burnt? Is this absorption final? The mind of man is so constituted that it refuses to derive satisfaction in the conflagration of the world. There was one way out of the difficulty, and that was to make the movement circular. What had happened once could happen again. When the period of unification ended, Zeno forecast the beginning of another world-process which would follow the same course as its predecessor, ending, like it, in fire. And for ever there lay before men the prospect of this unvarying round. To us such a notion is abhorrent, still we ought to remember that men not only in Greece and in India but even in modern Europe acquiesce in it. Yet Zeno is reported on one occasion to have pointed to the wooden base of an altar which was visible at the extremity of the Stoa: "This once stood in the middle of the Stoa;

¹ Aristotle, *Hist. of Animals*, I, 6.

it was removed out there because it got in people's way ; please apply it to yourselves."

From Zeno and other teachers the conclusion was drawn that in a necessary and endless succession world after world was created and destroyed, each new world being exactly like its predecessor, and all things in it without exception running round in the same order from beginning to end. In the words of Nemesis (*flor. c.* end of fourth or beginning of fifth century A.D.): "The Stoics taught that in fixed periods of time a burning and destruction of all things takes place, and the world returns again from the beginning into the very same shape as it had before, and that the restoration of them all happens not once but often, or rather that the same things are restored an infinite number of times."¹ Aristotle maintained that all the arts and all the sciences have been found and lost an infinite number of times already.² Stoicism, in some of its aspects, reflects the hopelessness and world-weariness which see in modern progress only "an endless effort, and, if need be, by endless pain." The same sombre tendency sees no evolution but rather a long series of cycles of death and revival, of endless mutations in constant progressions: *tout lasse, tout passe, tout se refait*. Going round in a circle, however, is in no wise the equivalent of going on.

The conflagration of the universe will not be a destruction ; it will rather be a change, a renewal of all things.³ The thing that hath been is that which shall be, and there is no new thing under the sun.⁴ The world spins back, simply reversing its motion. "Where the parts are perishable, so is the whole ; but the parts of the universe are perishable, for they change into one another ; therefore the universe is perishable."⁵ Posidonius (*c.* 135–*c.* 50 B.C.) believes firmly in the future conflagration.⁶ All will return in exactly the same order. That is, Socrates will revisit this globe to raise the same questions with the same replies, and Plato will redream the same fancies.⁷ This dreary prospect finds its basis in Heraclitus, who propounds the view that the world is in essence fire which is extinguished and lit ceaselessly.⁸ It is easy to understand Seneca's *tedium vitæ* when he thought of it, to use a modern phrase, as an infinite recurrent series. He was really to finish nothing, for in the revolution of the circle it must come again and again to him.⁹

¹ Nem., *De Nat. Hom.*, c. 38 ; Polybius, *Hist.*, VI, c. v ff ; II, p. 462, 575 ff. ; Cicero, *De nat. deor.*, II, 20, 46, 51 ; Origen, *Con. Cels.*, IV ; Origen, *De Principiis*, III, 6.

² *Politics*, II, 5, 1264 A, 1–5 ; IV (vii), 10, 1329 B, 25–7 ; *De Cælo*, I, 3, 270 B, 16–20.

³ Seneca, *Quæst. Natur.*, III, 29 : "Antiquus ordo revocabitur."

⁴ Cf. Cicero, *De nat. deor.*, II, 46, 118. Cf. E. Bevan's admirable book, *Stoics and Sceptics*, lecture i.

⁵ Diog. Laert., VII, 141.

⁶ Cicero, *Div.*, 49, 111.

⁷ Cf. St. Aug., *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xii, c. xiii.

⁸ Cf. Stobæus, *Ecl. Phy.*, I, 37.

⁹ Seneca, *Ad Lucilium*, Ep. xxiv. Cf. *De tranquillitate animi*, ch. i and ii ; Horace, *Carm.*, II, 18, 15 ; Lucretius, *De natura rerum*, III, 920–50.

Shelley presents us with this attitude to the problem in the final chorus of his *Hellas*.

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn :
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far ;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star.
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize,
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be !
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free :
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of Death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime ;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued :
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease ! must hate and death return ?
Cease ! must men kill and die ?
Cease ! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last !

The Stoic maintained that the world continually returns on itself without hope of improvement. Was not therefore pessimism inevitable ? The world was an enigma which was insoluble. Was there any hope of winning real knowledge ? The negative answer is plain even in the early days of Greek philosophy—in Xenophanes (c. 540-c. 500 B.C.) : “ The

certain truth there is no man who knows, nor ever shall be, about the gods and all the things whereof I speak. Yea, even if a man should chance to say something utterly right, still he himself knows it not : there is nothing anywhere but guessing.”¹ “When they have but looked upon the little portion of their own life,” Empedocles (c. 490-430 B.C.) confesses, “they fly away in a moment, like smoke, persuaded each one of that particular thing only with which he has come into contact as they are driven hither and thither, and yet each one flatters himself that he has found the whole ; so far are these things beyond the reach of men, not to be seen of the eye or heard of the ear, or comprehended of the mind.”² You could only, according to Sextus Empiricus, a Greek physician of the third century A.D., infer something you did not see from something you did see, when you had actually observed those things, or precisely similar things, in connexion. Sextus refused to believe there were pores in the body simply because pores were not perceived by the senses. The precise measurement or the accurate observation was impossible because the most ordinary instruments of the laboratory of to-day were unknown. It is easy for us to draw a sharp line between a hypothesis in physical science and ethics : the effects of the one can be observed or weighed, those of the other cannot. That is, the scepticism of Sextus was justifiable, his disbelief in hypothesis warranted.

Epictetus (c. A.D. 60-130) and Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-180) lived in a world of their own, but it is one out of touch with ours. Optimists as they are, they incline to a pessimistic view of the age in which their lot is cast. There is confusion and evil without : let them have the shelter of truth within. Just as Plato and Aristotle brought all nature and all life within the scope of philosophy, they tend to withdraw both from it. According to Mr. Bradley, “the world is the best of all possible worlds, and everything in it is a necessary evil.” As Stoics, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius literally believed this epigram. Each was optimistic when he surveyed the universe and the law of reason, and each from this standpoint believed in the reality of evil. At the same time each was pessimistic when he regarded particular things or events in the world. Marcus Aurelius is constantly declaring his belief in the perfectibility of a universe in which he sees everything going wrong. He believed in the community of spirits, yet he is perpetually exhorting himself to expect nothing but misunderstanding and malevolence from mortals. He has no hope of anything like general progress ; he seems to think that there will be nothing new in human life in the remotest future.³ In spite of the fact that all the forces of the day are undermining his ideal, still it is eternally true. It is a wellnigh hopeless prospect though a nobly hopeless one. The subjectivity of the religion of the Emperor is as manifest in the *Meditations* as that of the African bishop in the *Confessions*. There is a world between the despair of the one and the joy of the other. “What do you wish to know ?” St. Austin

¹ *Frag.* 34, Diels.

² *Ibid.*, 2.

³ *Meditations*, IV, 32 ; VII, 47 ; IX, 29.

asks himself in his *Soliloquies*, and the answer is, "God and the soul." "Nothing more than this?" "This and this only." This subjective religion goes back to days long before the birth of St. Austin, before the advent even of Christianity. Its existence explains, in part at least, the speedy success of the Church. It "came to its own" and "its own received it." The Stoic was disappointed with the course of temporal affairs: Christ came to rescue him from his disappointment.

The new belief and the old were not so incongruous as at first sight might appear. The Stoic held that events are the outcome of perfect reason which presides over everything.¹ He knew that reason presided over the world-process, and he also knew that this world-process led nowhere. How were these two inconsistent views to be reconciled? At bottom the Stoic rested on the conception of wisdom, which has not produced practical perfectibility, but which has given men the law of life. This wisdom embraced the world above as well as that below. Heaven was quite visible any clear night, and there were all the souls of men till another conflagration began another process in the evolution of the world. Posidonius provides occupation for them. Were they not watching the stars go round? Scientific as we are, the prospect does not inspire us. It evidently inspired Virgil (70-19 B.C.) who, in the *Georgics*,² tells us he covets not the stimulus of the past, though he does covet the understanding of the sciences: he seeks to grasp the "ways of the sky and the stars." It inspired Cicero³ (106-43 B.C.) and it inspired Seneca.⁴ No doubt this attitude was not so disinterested as it seems. Were not the movements of the stars secretly connected with the life of man? Was there not a hidden bond between astrology and astronomy?

Nature does not implant in us knowledge or virtue ready made: she bestows the capacity of becoming virtuous.⁵ Virtue is the road to wisdom which brings happiness to man.⁶ Besides, there is progress in wisdom.⁷ Nature determines the social and political functions of man. Instead of the view of the continual return of the same things, the idea of social amelioration begins to emerge. According to Seneca all men have the same origin. "All men, if we ascend to the source, have the gods for their father."⁸ In his judgment even slaves ought to be our friends:⁹ thus the conception of equality appears. The levelling tendency of the doctrine is patent in the circumstance that the two greatest of the later Stoics were a slave and an emperor. The justification of these charges turns on the fact that in a state of nature there are no slaves: all are free. There are, however, few watchwords more dangerous than

¹ Cleanthes, *Hymn to Jupiter*, in Stob., *Eclog. Phy.*, I and 3. Cf. Marcus Aurelius, *Medit.*, IV, 23; VI, 14.

² *Georgics*, II, 475-92.

³ *Tusc. Dis.*, I, 44-5; *De Rep.*, VI, 16.

⁴ *Ad Marciam de consol.*, 25.

⁵ Seneca, *Ep.*, 29, 64, 85.

⁶ *Ibid.*, *Ep.*, 76.

⁷ Seneca, *De const. sapient.*, VII; *Ep.*, 71-2, 75.

⁸ *Ibid.*, *Ep.*, 44.

⁹ *Ibid.*, *Ep.*, 47.

that of "Return to Nature." Does nature mean the ideal which man sets before him as his goal? Or does it mean the earliest stage in his existence as opposed to the latest, which is assumed to be artificial? Is the savage or the animal condition the end to be achieved? From the time of Antisthenes (426-336 B.C.) to that of Rousseau the latter, with disastrous effects, has been the reading chosen. Two contemporaries of Aristophanes (c. 444-c. 380 B.C.), Crates and Pherecrates, exhibit traces of this meaning. In the *Savages* of the latter, the chorus consists of haters of mankind who threw off the restraints of civilization in the woods,¹ experiencing the failure of all such experiments.

The step from equality at home to equality abroad is soon taken by the Stoic. The law of Rome did not apply to the stranger: the law of nature did. As the new ideas prevailed the law of nature gained in importance at the expense of Roman law, and became the germ of International Law. In essence the world is a city formed by the gods and men.² As Wesley took the world for his parish, so a man like Seneca took the world for his country. This same ideal of perfect humanity lies at the base of the passages in the *Meditations* in which Marcus Aurelius lauds the city of Zeus which he loves.³ The Stoics were not the first to conceive a cosmopolitan State, for the Cynics had preceded them. This State agreed admirably with the happy age of the Antonines.

At the very time of the early Stoics Epicurus (342-270 B.C.) was developing a conception of progress and his philosophy contains more than the beginning of the doctrine professed by the Sophists.⁴ Were it not for Lucretius⁵ our knowledge of Epicurus would be scanty, but he provides us with a full account of a notable attempt to get rid of the supernatural. The mind of Epicurus conceives the social state not as it ought to be but as it actually is. For him, as for Lucretius, the important matter is the survey of knowledge and of civilization through past ages. Familiar as he was with Empedocles, Epicurus knows that human life has passed from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge, the source of all quietism and happiness.⁶ The mind of man has at last passed the superstitious stage.⁷ In truth philosophy has taken the place formerly occupied by superstition. Much as Lucretius (c. 99-55 B.C.) admires Epicurus he lets fall hints which show, inconsistently enough from his standpoint, that the past was better than the present. Did not in olden times matters come easily to men? Did they not possess simple joys? Did voyages at sea, did war, did luxury claim so many victims as to-day? ⁸ Is not Nature right to tell man,

¹ Plato, *Protagoras*, 327 D.

² Cicero, *De nat. deor.*, II; *De legibus*, I; Seneca, *Con. ad Marciam*, 18, 1; Euseb., *Præp. evang.*, XV.

³ *Meditations*, IV, 23; XII, 36.

⁴ Cf. the speech of Callicles in Plato's *Gorgias*.

⁵ *De nat. rer.*, V, 1181 ff.

⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 62 ff.

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 1157-74; V, 935 ff., 988-1010.

greedy of pleasure and novelty, that she can devise nothing new, for everything returns as before? ¹ Will not the universe one day be destroyed? ² These questions no doubt are not the bedrock of the thought of the poet: still they are in his poem. ³ On the other hand, he argues that as the world is not the handiwork of the gods, its increase in intelligence and industry affords evidence of progress. ⁴ Advance, he argues, in material comfort is not synonymous with advance in happiness, just as one might argue that our material progress is nothing more than an extra-flooding wave of an ebbing tide. Lucretius is strikingly clear that material and even artistic improvement does not increase the happiness of men. ⁵

The view set forth in the fifth book of the *De natura rerum* is that the general law of existence is change. ⁶ Nothing remains as it was in the beginning: one thing disappears and is replaced by another: what was formerly is to-day impossible, and what has never been will yet be realized. ⁷ In Lucretius the materialistic and agnostic tendencies of Empedocles, Democritus and Epicurus are revived. Aristotle regarded life as an organism, Lucretius as a mechanism. Aristotle is teleological, Lucretius is nothing of the kind. The former carries his conception of nature into the law of the gradual development of organic life: the latter does not. Lucretius, like Parmenides (*flor.* 513 B.C.), Democritus (460-361 B.C.), and Anaxagoras (500-428 B.C.) thinks that plants arise directly from the earth. ⁸ From Epicurus he takes the idea of the survival of the fittest: some men were out of harmony with their surroundings, died, and were replaced. Still Aristotle is an evolutionist, and Lucretius is just as certainly not. The latter does not believe in gradual development by the descent of higher forms from lower, though he believes in the successive appearance of different forms of life. The animals and plants of Lucretius, unlike those of Aristotle, spring from the earth in their present form: with them nature makes a leap. This is not evolution in the true sense, yet, curiously enough, it was one day to take a great share in the growth of the idea. To Aristotle the process of evolution was like the emergence of the plant from under the ground, where its germinative forces have been slowly maturing, whereas Lucretius conceived it to be the light of a spark for which the explosive train has not long been laid.

Generation succeeds generation: there is no break. The notion of continuity means more to Lucretius than to Epicurus. The latter is not content with change in nature: he believes that there are times in the span of existence better than others. Lucretius was well aware that in early society force was the only remedy: laws did not exist. ⁹ By virtue of

¹ *De nat. rer.*, III, 945.

² *Ibid.*, II, 1148-74; V, 93-6.

³ Cf. Ovid, *Met.*, I, 89-150; I., 256-8.

⁴ *De nat. rer.*, II, 181.

⁵ *Ibid.*, V, 1379 ff., especially 1410.

⁶ *Ibid.*, V, 828-36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, III, 964; *Ibid.* V, 855-77.

⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 780.

⁹ *Ibid.*, V, 959.

mind men left this condition behind them.¹ No Prometheus brought the fire which the ingenuity of human beings discovered.² Genius has accomplished much: so too have the numberless groping efforts of ordinary men. Steady work renders better what was primitive, mediocre. According to Lucretius and Epicurus necessity has always been the principal agent in progress. To need, for example, we owe the names of things: that is the origin of language.³ To chance was due the first union of men and women, and in time conjugal love succeeded. Kings built fortified towns, and the cause of progress was served by the necessity of avoiding aggression.⁴ On the death of the kings democracy succeeded, and then came magistrates and laws with justice in their hand. Force as the only remedy disappeared definitely, and the reign of law was ushered in.⁵

At the same time human industry took its rise. The first instruments of man were his hands, his nails, his teeth, then stones, then branches of trees, afterwards the flame and the fire.⁶ This is the closest approach Lucretius makes to the doctrine of evolution. Later came the metals—brass, gold, iron, money, lead. The discovery of iron combined with the discovery of fire permitted man to manufacture implements adapted to agriculture and to war,⁷ and it assisted in the improved clothing the tailor devised.⁸ Stage by stage man developed, and in the course of his development nature suggested experiments to him. What nature was doing of herself suggested to imitative man the art, for example, of grafting. The sighs of the winds through the reeds invited man to invent the flute.⁹ Once the stage in which physical strength counted for everything was past, music and song were cultivated. For the future there is an æsthetic as well as a material side to life.¹⁰ Throughout all these changes and chances man is travelling along the road to improvement of his mechanical appliances, the amelioration of his earthly lot. Time is required for this advance, for all growth is by infinitesimal steps.¹¹ Men do not become men at once: trees are only shrubs in their early life. To Lucretius, as to Diogenes Laertius (*c.* 412–323 B.C.), time produces growth in everything. Little by little experience taught man to note the regular movements of the heavens and the return of the seasons, foreshadowing the true nature of things. Once the will of the gods was deemed sufficient to account for everything, whereas now it is abundantly evident that there are natural causes at work. Once chance ruled all things in heaven and earth, whereas now clearly there is a sameness, an orderliness in the phenomena all around us.

The originality of the conception of Epicurus and Lucretius is so remarkable that it is not till the *Esquisse* of Condorcet (1743–1794) that we meet with a similar theory. Evolution there has been in the

¹ *De natura rerum*, V, 1107, 1187.

² V, 1450.

³ V, 1143–55.

⁴ V, 1281–1307.

⁵ V, 1382.

⁶ V, 180 ff. Cf. I, 310 ff.

⁷ I, 208–14.

⁸ V, 1109–20.

⁹ V, 1028–90.

¹⁰ V, 1350–60.

¹¹ V, 1391.

past: with that Lucretius stops. Evolution in the future he scarcely contemplates. He catches glimpses of the truth through the clouds, but there is no clearness in his vision. The gods have no existence unless as shadowy beings who have as little concern with us as we have with men in an undiscovered island. There is no hell and there is no hereafter.

Ovid (43 B.C.-18 A.D.) expresses with great beauty the popular faith in four ages of continual deterioration,¹ and represents Jove as remembering that "it is recorded in the book of fate, that the time will come when the sea, and the earth, and the palaces of heaven will be kindled into flames and glow with fervent heat, and the laboured structure of the world will perish."² With this prospect in view nevertheless he draws his picture of the golden age which he has derived from Varro (116-28 B.C.), who in turn may have derived it from Posidonius.³

Virgil (70-19 B.C.) sings of the wonderful age, a Saturnian time, when suffering and sin were unknown, when men had all things in common, and nature poured forth her bounties generously and spontaneously. Man fell from this condition, but he believes that a beneficent purpose underlay his fall, that Jove abolished this easy state of existence in order that man might be forced to evolve the resources in his own mind and in outer nature, and that experience by dint of thought should hammer out the different arts in a course of gradual discovery and improvement.⁴ The poet thus combined belief in a fall with belief in progress; perhaps he combined belief in both with a belief in world cycles, and he has given unsurpassed expression to the hope that the simplicity, peace and happiness of the golden age would be restored.⁵ In Roman poetry the idea of the recurrence of the golden age is not often present. The Jewish conception of a Messiah whose advent might be hastened by the piety of a single man was not one that appealed to the Roman mind. The fourth *Eclogue* of Virgil constitutes a notable exception, for in it there is a prediction of the coming of the golden age. The early Church at once saw a forerunner in Virgil which its members expressed in the phrase *Maro vates Gentilium*.⁶ In the *Æneid* the poet speaks of Augustus as destined to restore the golden age to Latium, the country once ruled by Saturn.⁷ After his day this vision ceases save in the shape of flattery addressed to an Emperor on his accession. Thus Calpurnius (*fior.* c. 290 A.D.) in his *Eclogues* salutes Nero as the founder of a new age of Saturn and of Numa.⁸

In the fourth *Eclogue* Virgil introduces a happy variation on the Stoic conception of the theory of cycles. He announces the return of the age of gold after the age of iron:

*Magnus ab integro sæculorum nascitur ordo.
... redeunt Saturnia regna.*

¹ *Metamorphoses*, I, 89-150.

² *Ibid.*, XV, 96-142.

³ *Ecl.*, IV. Cf. T. R. Glover's illuminating book, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Century*, chap. 8.

⁴ Cf. Clement of Alex., *Strom.*, I, 28.

⁵ VI, 792-4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 256-8.

⁷ *Georgics*, I, 120-49.¹

⁸ Calp., *Ecl.*, I, 63 ff.

Another Achilles will besiege another Troy, for the causes of war will not wholly disappear, but that is the utmost concession he will make. Like Lucretius he feels more than a passing interest in the mysteries of nature :

*felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*¹

His fundamental thought is *tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem*, and this thought was grasped by Prudentius (348–c. 404 A.D.) and Claudian (A.D. c. 350–404), though it lay outside Macrobius (A.D. c. 360–430). The feeling of human limitation is never absent from the mind of Virgil. He is surprised that the dead should desire to live again :

O my father, and are there, and must we believe it, he said,
Spirits that fly once more to the sunlight back from the dead,
Souls that anew to the body return and the fetters of clay ?
Can there be any who long for the light thus blindly as they ?²

Tennyson grasps his spirit admirably in the line :

Thou majestic in thy sadness at the doubtful doom of human kind.

According to Horace (65 B.C.–A.D. 8) :

*Damnosa quid non imminuit dies ?
Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore.*³

In the *Satires* Horace develops another view,⁴ describing the progress of man when he was a mere animal, filthy and speechless, to the stage when he built and fortified towns, established laws and morality.

Cicero (106–43 B.C.), like Plato and Aristotle, expresses no opinion on general progress, though he declares that philosophy is progressive ; that study and application result in the discovery of new truth ; that the most recent things are generally the most precise and certain.⁵ There are, however, perils lurking in these. Government was so highly centralized that men were at first afraid and then unable to think for themselves. Even Tacitus (A.D. 54–c. 134) discerns an *inscitia reipublicæ ut alienæ*.⁶ He believed in virtue, though he had almost ceased to believe in the justice of God.⁷ Was not the travail of his country the result of chance ?⁸ How could there be a Providence which allowed Nero to wear the imperial purple ?⁹ Making due allowance for the exaggeration of the satirist, the society described by Juvenal (A.D. c. 60–135) is even more depraved than that outlined by Tacitus.¹⁰

On the other hand, the elder Pliny (A.D. 23–79) counsels us “ firmly to trust that the ages go on incessantly improving.”¹¹ He, however, feels

¹ *Georgics*, II, 490.

² *Æneid*, VI, 721.

³ *Odes*, III, ode 6.

⁴ *Satires*, book i, sat. iii, 131 ff.

⁵ *Academics*, I, 4 ; II, 5 ; *De Legibus*, I, 9.

⁶ *Hist.*, I, 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 2 ; *Agr.* 4.

⁸ *Ann.*, IV, 20.

⁹ *Ibid.*, XIV, 12.

¹⁰ *Juv.* I, 87, 147 ; X, 172. Cf. Marcus Aurelius, IX, 29, 34 ; V. 33.

¹¹ *Hist. Nat.*, XIX, 1–4.

more interest in collecting anecdotes than in collecting facts. About twelve years after Seneca's death he published, in the year A.D. 77, his book on *Natural History*. He claims to have read 2000 volumes of 100 authors, and in his Latin list he omits Seneca. The preface to the *Epitome of Roman History* which Florus (A.D. c. 60-138) has written anticipates ideas afterwards developed by Postel (1510-1581) and Lessing (1729-1781). The historian is clear that nations pass through a succession of ages similar to those of the individual. "If any one," he points out, "will consider the Roman people as if it were one man, and observe its entire course, how it began, how it grew up, how it reached a certain youthful bloom, and how it has since, as it were, been growing old, he will find it to have four degrees and stages." It is not important to consider these four degrees: it is important to see that an author in the reign of Trajan has been able to perceive them.

Of all the Roman writers on progress none has greater claims on our attention than Seneca (58 B.C.-A.D. 32). For real learning he feels a genuine interest but not for the study of what he regards as "useless letters," leaving to the one side such questions as whether the same poet wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*¹ or whether Homer or Hesiod was the earlier.² Stoic in the main as he was, he makes fun of the *grammatici*.³ Learning was apt to become logomachy, philosophy to become philology.⁴ He has a sovereign contempt for the 4000 volumes acquired by Didymus (A.D. c. 52-128), for do they not discuss such questions as the birth-place of Homer, the moral character of Sappho (c. 611-592 B.C.) and of Anacreon (c. 558-478 B.C.), and the like?⁵

When he speaks of the restoration of the world, Seneca holds that when it pleases God it will produce things. Will there not be then the opening of a very happy era in which man, born under better auspices, will be ignorant of all crimes and will be innocent?⁶ This era, or rather this improved world will, on the Stoic hypothesis, pass away, being replaced through fire by another. The conflagration notion made a strong appeal to the feelings, for with it the perpetual struggle between good and evil ceased. In the interval before the appearance of a new world the Deity enjoys a period of rest, during which he can leisurely meditate upon the universe that has vanished into smoke⁷ and plan improvements in the one he is about to create.⁸ The universe used to be happy and innocent.⁹ Men lived together in the distant past in societies, willing to obey the strongest and wisest of their number¹⁰; none were

¹ *Dial.*, X, 13, 1-9. Cf. *Quæst. Natur.*, IV, 13, 1.

² *Dial.*, X, 13, § 6.

³ *Ibid.*, § 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, § 23.

⁵ *Ibid.*, § 24-34.

⁶ *Quæst. Natur.*, III, chap. xxvii. Cf. Plutarch, *De commun. not.*; J. Lipsius, *Physiologiæ stoicorum*, libri tres, p. 258.

⁷ Seneca, *Ep.*, 9, 16.

⁸ *Quæst. Natur.*, III, 28, 7.

⁹ *Ad Lucilium*, Ep. 90; Horace, *Odes*, III, 14.

¹⁰ Seneca, *Ep.*, 90, 5.

tempted to wrong their neighbour. The "return to nature" notion is plain in his account of men dwelling in natural grottos or in the stems of trees, and obtaining nourishment from tame animals and wild fruits. In process of time they develop the arts, learning to bake, to build, and to make use of the metals. According to Seneca, his own age is one far removed from primeval simplicity, though it is no worse than others.¹ It is necessary to distinguish between moral and material progress. Seneca, following Posidonius, believes that man had made progress in science and in the material arts of life, but that this advance in learning had been accompanied by a moral decline. The political economist to-day reckons that the awakening of human beings to the need of satisfying their wants is a mark of advance, and the greater the range of these wants the greater is the advance, whereas to Seneca the reverse of this conception is the truth.² There used to be no struggle for existence: the earth supplied sufficient food for all.³ The moment gold was discovered happiness fled: the love of it was indeed the root of all evil.⁴ A crowd now is an assembly of savage beasts, a spectacle of vice incarnate.⁵ This pessimistic outlook on life is in no wise peculiar to Seneca: it is characteristic of first- and second-century thought.⁶ There seems no indication that movement was thought of as a spiral and not as an unvarying round. There was not what Wordsworth calls "the sweet air of futurity."

The security afforded by the Empire was sufficient to overcome internal disorders. With the *pax Romana* around him Seneca could indulge in speculations on progress. With Huxley he holds that though there are many clever men, honest folk are as scarce as ever; and this thought Rousseau (1712-1778) borrowed.⁷ Still Seneca maintains the sciences progress and their applications become more extensive. The sagacity of men contrives inventions.⁸ We can live without science, for nature has allowed animals to exist; but as we create needs we devise arts to satisfy them. We receive these discoveries from our forefathers, and when we transmit them to our descendants we transmit an enlarged inheritance. "There remains yet and there will remain much to do; and the man who will be born a thousand years hence will not refuse the opportunity of adding something more."⁹

The *Natural Questions* goes far to explain the action of Gian Galeazzo

¹ *De Benef.*, I, 10.

² *Ep.*, 90, § 42.

³ *Ibid.*, 90, § 38.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 90, § 5, § 12, § 19, § 36.

⁵ *De Ira*, II, 8, § 1. Cf. II, 8, 9; *Ad. Marc.*, II, 11, 17, 20.

⁶ Lucretius, *De rer. nat.*, II, 1150, 1174; V, 66-7, 1429-30; Horace, *Odes*, I, 2, 14; III, 6; Tac., *Hist.*, I, c. 3; II, 37; Tac., *Ann.*, III, cc. xviii and xxvii; IV, c. i; XVI, c. xvi; Cicero, *De Opp.*, I, c. xxv; II, c. viii; III, c. xvii; *Tusc. quest.*, II, c. ii; Juvenal, *Satires*, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15; Seneca, *De Ira*, II, 8, 9; Seneca, *Quæst. Natur.*, II, c. xxxv; III, c. xxx.

⁷ *Ad Lucilium*, Ep. 95; Rouss., *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, I, p. 20. Cf. Montaigne, *Essais*, book i, chap. xxiv.

⁸ Seneca, *Ep.*, 90. Cf. Cicero, *De Legibus*, I, ch. ix.

⁹ Seneca, *Ep.*, 64.

in making not only Dante (A.D. 1265-1321) but also Seneca have chairs founded in their memory and for the discussion of their work. True, it is characterized by hypothesis not founded on experiment. True, the author is a moralist first, a physical scientist afterwards. To him there were no natural phenomena compared with the fascination virtue exercised over his soul.¹ To him as to Kant (1724-1804) there is a bond between the starry heavens above and the moral law within. Throughout the *Natural Questions* he is well aware of the necessity of procuring correct data. He records his careful observations when digging among his vines. Men like Lucilius suffered through Seneca's desire to have phenomena recorded accurately, especially when they were rare. He is anxious to be just to his predecessors: "First of all I feel bound to say in general terms that the old views are crude and inexact. As yet men were groping their way round truth. Everything was new to those who made the first attempt to grasp it; only later were the subjects accurately investigated. But all subsequent discoveries must nevertheless be set down to the credit of those early thinkers. It was a task demanding great courage to remove the veil that hid nature, and, not satisfied with a superficial view, to look beneath the surface and dive into the secrets of the gods. A great contribution to discovery was made by the man who first conceived the hope of its possibility. We must therefore listen indulgently to the ancients. No subject is perfect while it is but beginning. The truth holds not merely of the subject (i.e. earthquakes) we are dealing with, the greatest and most complex of all, in which, however, much may be accomplished, every succeeding age will still find something fresh to accomplish. It holds alike in every other concern: the first principles have always been a long way off from the complete science."² We are here far removed from the notion that the whole body of truth has been discovered.

This is more evident in the next quotation: "It is not a thousand years since Greece 'counted the number of the stars and named them every one.' And there are many nations at the present hour who merely know the face of the sky and do not yet understand why the moon is obscured in an eclipse. It is but recently indeed that science brought home to ourselves certain knowledge on the subject. The day will yet come when the progress of research through long ages will reveal to sight the mysteries of nature that are now concealed. A single lifetime, though it were wholly devoted to the study of the sky, does not suffice for the investigations of problems of such complexity. And then we never make a fair division of the few brief years of life as between study and vice. It must therefore require long successive ages to unfold all. The day will yet come when posterity will be amazed that we remain ignorant of things that will seem to them so plain."³

This book of Seneca's was the last word on science spoken by the classical world, and it is the only work of importance bearing on science that has come down to us in Latin. Herein he possessed a marked

¹ *Ep.* 73, § 13.

² *Quæst. Natur.*, book vi, 5.

³ *Ibid.*, book vii, 25.

advantage over Aristotle, whose *Physics* was written in Greek, a tongue much less familiar to the mediæval world. This book became a text-book of science to the men of the Middle Ages. It has been the infinite loss of mankind that the two following passages have not sunk deeply into the mind of Europe. "Aristotle has finely said," remarks Seneca, "that we should never be more reverent than when we are treating of the gods. We enter a temple with all due gravity, we lower our eyes, draw up our toga, and assume every token of modesty when we approach the sacrifice. How much more is all this due when we discuss the heavenly bodies, the stars, the nature of the gods, lest in ignorance we make any assertion regarding them that is hasty or disrespectful; or lest we unwittingly lie. Let us not be surprised that what is buried so deep should be unearthed so slowly. . . . But all these questions (i.e. on comets) are foreclosed by my statement that they are not accidental fires, but inwoven in the texture of the universe, directed by it in secret, but not often revealed. And how many bodies besides revolve in secret, never dawning upon human eyes? Nor is it for man that God has made all things. How small a portion of His mighty work is entrusted to us." ¹ He proceeds to draw attention to the new discoveries: "How many animals we have come to know for the first time in our days. Many too that are unknown to us the people of a coming day will know. Many discoveries are reserved for the ages still to be, when our memory shall have perished. The world is a poor affair if it do not contain matter for investigation for the whole world in every age. Some of the sacred rites are not revealed to worshippers all at once. Eleusis contains some of his mysteries to show to votaries on their second visit. Nature does not reveal all her secrets at once. We imagine we are initiated in her mysteries: we are as yet but hanging around her outer courts. These secrets of hers are not open to all indiscriminately. They are withdrawn and shut up in the inner shrine. Of one of them this age will catch a glimpse, of another the age that will come after." ²

In all the classical writings there are no four quotations so plain in their views of all that the future holds for the man of science. Were such statements much read? Take the evidence of Quintilian (A.D. c. 40-100), who obviously thought Seneca an overrated man and placed Cicero far above him. ³ He has no doubt of the popularity of Seneca in his own times. ⁴ Moreover, was he not a Christian who corresponded with St. Paul? The Fathers reckoned him one of themselves. Jerome (A.D. 345-420) frankly gave him rank among recognized ecclesiastical writers. His statements must therefore be orthodox. In the Middle Ages he was famous as the author of the *Natural Questions*, and still more so as a moralist. Dante terms him "Seneca morale." ⁵ He is quoted by writers like Albert Magnus (c. 1193-1280), Vincent of Beauvais (c. 1200-1264), Walter Burley (1275-1357), John of Salisbury (c. 1110-1180) and Friar John of Wales (died c. 1285), who were acquainted with the *Natural*

¹ *Quæst. Natur.*, book vii, 30.

² *Ibid.*, book vii, 31.

³ *Inst. Orat.*, X, 1, 125-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 125.

⁵ *Inf.*, IV, 141.

Questions, and by writers such as Otto of Freisingen (died 1158) and Giraldus Cambrensis (c. 1146-1220) oftener than either Cicero or "Cato." Some of the manuscripts of the *Natural Questions* only contain Books I-IV, and this was probably the only part generally known.¹ Books VI and VII, which give us the four prophetic quotations, were largely unknown. It is therefore not surprising that the only mediæval writer who quotes passages from the *Natural Questions* with a distinct consciousness of the possibility of future progress in discovery is Roger Bacon (1214-92).² Walter Burley and John of Salisbury knew it indirectly. The latter recommends expressly its perusal³ and uses terms borrowed from it.⁴ In the *Annales Colimenses maximi*,⁵ A.D. 1235, there is a reference to the section of the *Natural Questions* discussing halves.⁶ It is practically certain, however, that all the mediæval references to this book refer to it as an authority for natural phenomena except in the case of Roger Bacon, who quotes it as an incentive for further progress.

The author of *Xanthippe and Polyxena*⁷ recognizes gratefully the goodness of God, His mercy and His eagerness for the redemption of the sinful, His providential care for those who serve Him. In this third-century book this last notion quite replaces for the Christian the fortune of the heathen novelists. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola (A.D. 353-431), in a letter to his friend Jovius pleads earnestly for the recognition of Divine Providence.⁸

If any one is anxious to understand the originality of St. Paul's conception of the future the ideal method is to peruse some of the authors here cited. As one reads them one wonders that all save Seneca stop short at the very point which is of the greatest interest, the nature of the future. A perusal of the *Natural Questions* and then a perusal of the Epistle to the Ephesians enable one to grasp in some measure the originality of St. Paul. Indeed the true idea of progress is a creation of Christianity, forming one of its finest achievements. The transition from the Apostle of the Gentiles to St. Austin (A.D. 354-430) is easy. The doctrine of original sin was held by both, and this doctrine is not optimistic. Theologian as St. Austin primarily is, the invasions of the barbarians forced him to become an observer. Society, according to him, is divided into two orders: one is the ordinary society of men, the other is the society of men who live according to God. Paganism represents one city, Christianity the other.⁹ He views the history of Rome in the light

¹ There is a copy in the library of St. Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury (cf. M. R. James's *Ancient Libraries of Canterbury and Dover*, p. 305) and at Eton (cf. M. R. James's *Catalogue of MSS. at Eton College*, p. 31).

² Bacon's *Metaphysics*, which is in Charles's monograph, quotes *Quæst. Natur.*, VI, 5, §§ 2, 3; VII, 25, §§ 3, 4.

³ *Policraticus*, II, 320 (Webb).

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 70. John of Salisbury borrows from *Quæst. Natur.*, I, 11, 1-2.

⁵ *Mon. Germ. Script.*, XVII.

⁶ *Quæst. Natur.*, I, 2, § 1.

⁷ In *Apocrypha Anecdota* (ed. M. R. James), Cambridge, 1893.

⁸ *Epist.* 16 and *Carm.* 22. Cf. *Epist.* 5.

⁹ *De Civ. Dei*, XV, 1.

of the establishment of the *Civitas Dei*. This establishment constitutes progress for humanity.¹ Christianity, however, is no radical innovation without roots in the past; the ages have been a preparation for it. In spite of digressions, the *Civitas Dei* is devoted to the moral significance of history. The providence of God in the life of the world is the burden of the message.² St. Austin stood as firmly for this belief in the Christian world as the Stoic did in the ancient world. This conception is indeed the consummation of the moral and religious evolution of humanity. The light of God appears everywhere: it shines under Moses and the prophets; it flickers under the patriarchs; and it enlightens the world in Jesus Christ, greater than the patriarchs, greater than the prophets. With Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150 or 160-c. 213) St. Austin recognizes that other beliefs, other ideas prepared the time for Him who is the Light of the World.³ The world advances, thanks to Christianity, towards perfection. From God alone comes such a consummation; from Him we hope for eternal life. As the world therefore advances, to St. Austin the cycle theory is sheer madness. Jesus Christ died once: He will die no more, for death hath no more dominion over Him.

It is noticeable that St. Austin does not ignore the development of industry⁴ through the ages, and makes a notable application of it in his consideration of the destiny of man. He can allow no activity to be outside or apart from God. There is a complete gradation of nature: there is also a complete gradation of soul. There is, he observes, a wide difference between the evolution of humanity and the evolution of an individual. Old age is perfect in the former: it is feeble and decadent in the latter. Here is the germ of the idea which lies in the background of all the philosophy of progress in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. St. Austin perceives it clearly. Limiting himself to the study of civilization which has preceded Christianity, he compares the education of the human race to that of a single man; it must follow the progressive succession of the ages in order to raise itself, by degrees, from time to eternity, from the visible to the invisible.⁵ "Divine Providence, which guides marvellously all things, governs the succession of generations, from Adam to the end of the ages as a single man."⁶ In observing the action of God in history St. Austin also observes the successive epochs of humanity, the steps towards progress. There are three epochs, youth, characterized by the absence of law, from Adam to Abraham; the virile age from Abraham to Christ, which is the epoch of law; at last, old age, which is the era of Christianity and the epoch of grace.⁷ In each of these three epochs there are subdivisions, and, following the procedure of the Jewish schools, he seeks parallels in other eras. He compares the six epochs of the world to the six days of creation,

¹ Cf. Vincent of Beauvais, XXVI-XXX.

² *De Civ. Dei*, V, 11; cf. V, 1.

³ *Ibid.*, II, especially 28.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XXII, 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, X, 14; cf. XXII, 24.

⁶ *De quæstionibus octoginta tribus*, quæstio 58.

⁷ *De Civ. Dei*, XV-XIX.

seeking analogies between the events of each period and the works of each day of creation. For example, the third epoch is distinguished by the separation of the people of God from other peoples: similarly the third witnessed the separation of the earth from the waters. In *De Genesi contra Manichæos* he returns to a consideration of the ages of the world, adding a seventh to correspond to the seventh day.¹ Then the Lord will stand forth in clearness; then will those find rest with Christ to whom he said, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." This seventh day will not be quite like the other six: there will be no night. The perfection then attained in Christ will be eternal.

Interpretations like these add as little to our conception of progress as the Gnostic views. Still St. Austin formulates a serious contribution to the growth of progress from the point of view of history.² Like Gregory of Nyssa (332-395) he adopted an explanation of the creation which was in part naturalistic. In his view of the origin of life he stands midway between biogenesis and abiogenesis. It is perhaps too much to say that he put forward a theory of evolution, but he plainly rejected the doctrine of special creation.

Like St. Paul, Clement of Alexandria regarded pagan philosophy as performing the function of the Mosaic law in leading men to Christ. In particular, was not Greek philosophy given by God for the purpose of training nations? ³ From the Pythagorean Numenius ⁴ he takes his seminal simile, comparing truth to the body of Pentheus, torn asunder by fanatics, each seizing a limb and fancying he has the whole.⁵ The mount of God is to him the true Cithæron.⁶ There is a unity in knowledge for the bond is Christian philosophy. Like Philo Judæus (20 B.C.-A.D. c. 40), Numenius (A.D. c. 150) asks with Clement, "What is Plato but Moses expressing himself in Attic Greek?" ⁷ Fathers like Clement of Alexandria, Origen (A.D. 185-254), and Gregory of Nyssa believe that after the fall of man there was a progressive side to his education. Gregory of Nyssa makes the expressive comparison of the soul to a vase whose capacity grows as it is filled and, with the capacity, the force of aspiration always with the greatest effusions of divine grace. Many-sided a thinker as Origen is, he is unable to furnish a contribution to the theory of progress. Nor is there much cause for surprise in this, for his system of thought excludes it. Man was created perfectly, but his nature has fallen. It must return to the perfection in which it has been created, and from which it is infinitely removed to-day.⁸ That is, in the system of Origen there is no progress: there is return or rehabilitation. The classical writers looked backward to the golden age, and theology, imposing the dogma of the fall of man, worked in harmony with them.

¹ *De Genesi contra Manichæos*, I, 24. Cf. Tertullian, *De virginibus velandis*, chap. i.

² Cf. W. Cunningham, *S. Austin*, p. 114.

³ *Euseb. Præp.*, Ev. xiv, 5, 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, 25.

⁵ *Epistola ad Gregoriam Thaumaturgum*.

⁶ *Strom.*, VI, 149-68.

⁷ *Strom.*, I, 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 22, 150.

God, Origen thinks, disposes of the centuries as the years, and His providence accords to each century what the needs of the universe require.¹ One of his aspirations deserves mention. "I shall know after death," he said, "whether those stars are indeed animated."²

The Rome of Origen was not the Rome of Virgil or of Claudian. No Christian could as yet love the City of the Seven Hills as the heathen loved her. The Rome which Afrahat the Syrian and Tertullian (c. A.D. 160–c. 240), the first great Latin Father, regarded as lasting to the end of the world was being shaken to its foundations.³ About the middle of the fifth century Salvian, the presbyter of Marseilles, was moved by the *Völkerwanderung* to write his *De Gubernatione Dei*, describing the doom of the constitution, the civilization, and the culture of Rome. Still to Claudian and to Prudentius the memories of a thousand years clung around her, and to mankind she was the visible embodiment of the heart of the world. Polybius (204–122 B.C.) is among the first to perceive the idea of a providential destiny shaping the course of Roman history. The first Emperor, however, to adopt the new faith had forsaken old Rome. One point common to Claudian and Prudentius was their devotion to the metropolis. The latter seeks a purpose in the conquests effected by the Empire. He wants to know why God had so markedly through the centuries subdued race after race to Rome, and welded the world into one. St. Austin was capable of asking such a question: Cyprian was not. It is amazing to note that a Father like Cyprian (c. A.D. 200–258) denies the work of Providence. He actually says, "regna autem non merito accidunt sed sorte variantur."⁴ To Prudentius, however, the course is plain. There was to be one earthly empire and there was to be one heavenly empire: the one was required for the sake of the other. Mankind was to be one in Rome in order that it might be one in Christ. As the law was a schoolmaster to draw all men to Him, so the greatness of Rome was drawing all men to Him who was its Author.⁵ Clearly the heathen stand in the way of the success of the plan of the ages, and no less clearly the heretics break its unity.⁶ In the year A.D. 404 Prudentius put forth his apologia for Christianity, and in the second book he formulates a conception of progress akin to Browning:

*nonne hominem et pecudem distantia separat una ?
quod bona quadrupedum ante oculos sita sunt ; ego contra
spero.*

According to Boëthius (A.D. 470–c. 524) human destiny is under the influence either of *dæmonum varia sollertia* or *angelica virtute*,⁷ though he

¹ *Contra Celsum*, IV, c. lxxvii and lxxix, pp. 1135, Migne. Cf. S. Aust., *De Civ. Dei*, XII, c. XIII.

² On Christ as being "all in all" cf. J. A. Robinson's *Ephesians*, pp. 45 and 101, where Origen's views are given.

³ On the eternity of Rome cf. Claudian, *B. Get.*, 54, 506–11; Prudentius, *C. Sym.*, I, 455.

⁴ *Quod idola dei non sunt*, 5.

⁵ *Adv. Sym.*, I, 287; II, 582, 618; *Steph.*, II, 413.

⁶ On the latter cf. *C. Sym.*, I, 502; *Steph.*, II, 481.

⁷ *Philosophiæ Consolatio*, IV, 6.

believes that the world is under the beneficent sway of a *rerum bonus rector*.¹ Boëthius looks back to the declining days of the old classical world: Cassiodorus (c. A.D. 468–c. 568) looks forward to the dawn of the Christian Middle Ages. In the twelfth century Hugh de St. Victor (1098–1141), inspired by St. Austin, considers progress as the universal law of creation; even the angels make advances to perfection. All creatures share in these advances till the day of judgment, when all will share the immutability and perfection of God Himself. Of course, with some thinkers like Gregory of Tours (A.D. 539–593), Lambert of Hersfeld (*flor. c.* beginning of eleventh century) and Otto of Freisingen, the view of a catastrophic end of the world prevails. With Hugh de St. Victor the painful march of the race towards perfection is in no wise a consequence of the fall.² There exists a trace of the golden age hypothesis in the notion that all things were perfect in the very principle of creation in so far as God *directly* called them into being. Everything else arriving after the first process of creation is subject to the law of gradual growth, beginning with imperfection and ending with perfection. This is clear in the vegetable and animal worlds, and is no less clear in the world of the human race.³ In form Hugh de St. Victor denies progress in the domain of religion: in essence he affirms it.⁴ He distinguishes faith and the perception of faith. Faith is always the same, though of course it differs in individuals, according to their intellectual capacity, which grows through the different ages of mankind. If, however, the perception of faith changes, and if it develops, it is obvious that faith itself, at least as far as men are concerned, must progress. He raises the question: if faith has always been the same, where are we to find the belief in Jesus Christ before His incarnation?⁵ Hugh de St. Victor and St. Thomas Aquinas (1227–74) insist that all truth is one, that there is a progressive revelation of it, that as the coming of the Saviour drew near the knowledge of the truth increased.⁶ The sacraments of the law of nature shadowed forth the truth; those of the law of Moses were its image; and those instituted by Jesus Christ are the reality. That is, the early is a preparation for the later, but all are fundamentally one.⁷

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, “it is natural for human reason to arrive by degrees from the imperfect to the perfect. Hence the early philosophers taught imperfect truth, which afterwards was more clearly discovered by their successors.” It is exactly the same with the practical sciences; from many standpoints the early inventions were defective, later these defects were corrected with the result that machines were improved.⁸ He maintains, however, that faith remains constant as

¹ *Philosophiæ Consolatio*, IV, 1.

² Hugo de Sancto Victore, *Summa*, lib. i, part vi, c. 14.

³ *Ibid.*, lib. i, part vi, 26.

⁴ Hugo de Sancto Victore, *De Sacramentis*, lib. i, part x, c. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, lib. i, part x, c. 7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, lib. i, part xi, c. 6; St. Thom., *Summa contra Gentes*, IV, 57; *Op.*, IX, p. 493.

⁷ Hugo, *De Sacramentis*, lib. i, part xi, c. 6; lib. i, part xii, c. 3.

⁸ *Summa Theologica*, *Prima Secundæ*, quæst. 97, art. 1.

thoroughly as Newton believed in the law of change, of development. Dogmas are seemingly increasing in number. In reality it is not so, for the germ of them all lies in the creeds of the primitive Church.¹ To us dogma suggests a superfluous garment which trammels and incommodes the mind. The Stoics and St. Thomas realized the bitter need for dogma felt by minds which have been stripped to the winds of heaven. They were well aware that an unsolved enigma means intellectual discomfort. Therefore St. Thomas bends all his energies to the removal of the unsolved. There is another method of overcoming the difficulty: truth is unchanged, though its aspects are always changing.² The law of Moses was good, argues St. Thomas in the spirit of St. Austin and Prudentius, but it was not perfect. Was not, for example, grace lacking?³ He holds the outline of the doctrine of development, but he holds it as an ecclesiastic. Take an example. Why, he asks, was not the New Law of Christ bestowed upon men from the dawn of creation? The answer is St. Austin's: "The Gospel has not been preached to the first men because it contains the law of perfection; now perfection cannot exist in the very beginning of things."⁴ If we compare the law of Moses with that of Christ, the former is unquestionably imperfect; but if we compare it—and it is the only proper comparison—with the needs of the men for whom it has been provided, it was relatively perfect.⁵ The Mosaic law is the germ of the law of Christ just as much as the seed contains the essence of the tree.⁶ Here the comparative standpoint is adopted, and had its consequences been realized it would have constituted one of the greatest forward steps that man has ever taken. Hugh de St. Victor limits progress to the day of judgment: St. Thomas Aquinas forbids it to pass beyond the limits of the Gospel.⁷ That is, the consequences were not realized till the days of our own fathers.

St. Thomas possessed the Stoic passion for definition. It is possible to meet with passages in the *Summa Theologica* which may be taken to mean that he had a vague conception of something that, in the hands of a dialectician, might be called a theory of evolution, just as in his *De Regimine Principum* he has the idea of a contract made between the king and the people: indeed the germ of Rousseau's famous doctrine is to be found in the *De Regimine Principum*. But it would be as fair to call St. Thomas an advocate of Whiggism or of democracy as an evolutionist. Indeed a candid perusal of the *Summa Theologica* at once reveals the fact that the mind of this great thinker was pre-scientific. The idea that there might be endless knowledge was outside his scheme of things. The field of learning was strictly bounded, and his mind was quite competent to explore every part of it. Dean Colet (1466–1519) protested, not against the ignorance of St. Thomas Aquinas—for no one

¹ *Summa Theologica*, *Secundæ secundæ*, quæst. 1, art. 7.

² *Ibid.*, *Prima*, quæst. 16, art. 8.

³ *Ibid.*, *Prima secundæ*, quæst. 97, art. 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, quæst. 106, art. 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, quæst. 98, art. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, quæst. 107, art. 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, quæst. 106, art. 4.

could accuse the great Italian of lack of information—but against his confidence in thinking that he could define everything.

At the same time it is only right to lay stress on the sobriety of St. Thomas's views. He accepted, however, the authority of the false Areopagite in his opinions about the heavenly hierarchy, just as he accepted those of Aristotle on the star-moving intelligences. Roger Bacon possessed little sobriety in these matters, and he expounded explicitly what he thought was implicitly contained in them. Roger Bacon, like his fellow-Franciscans, was much impressed by the prophecies of the Abbot Joachim of Fiore (1130–1202), though Aquinas refused to see in him the marks of a genuine prophet. This estimate of Joachim is one of the few matters in which Dante differs from St. Thomas.¹ Aquinas, without so much as naming the Calabrian seer, examines his doctrine that a new age of the Holy Spirit is to be looked for, which will surpass that of the Gospel as the golden age that which went before it. The Angelic Doctor dissects the argument in the *Summa Theologica*,² which was one he had employed in another connexion, with a characteristic limitation. The latter he now produces. The New Law of the Gospel, St. Thomas lays down, is to last to the end of the world. The Franciscans were, on the other hand, one day to see in the saint of Assisi the fore-runner of a new age of the Spirit. This vision was denied St. Thomas, and the denial is all-important when we recollect his widespread influence. In a fresco, for example, of the Spanish chapel in Florence (c. 1535), Aquinas is depicted as enthroned among the Prophets and Evangelists, while in a lower row stand meekly the representatives of the Liberal Arts.

Astrology was of course the guide to action in life in the Middle Ages: it was also with Roger Bacon (1214–92) the guide to be employed in the choice of a religion.³ By the proper use of mathematica, the art of divination by the stars, it is possible to determine the date of the downfall of Mohammedanism.⁴ With Albumazar (c. A.D. 776–885) he holds that the origin of religions is to be sought in the conjunction of the planets. The influence of Seneca is evident and indeed he was a favourite author with Roger Bacon, who read his moral treatises at least as eagerly as his *Natural Questions*. No doubt Bacon's interest in Seneca was greater than it was in Cicero. It was quickened by the circumstance that he had unearthed some of the treatises of the Roman writer which had long been forgotten.⁵ He makes use of the treatise *De Generatione et Corruptione* when he discusses the effects of celestial forces on terrestrial matters.⁶ He is as sure as Grosseteste (c. 1175–1253) that heaven is not susceptible to alien influences⁷ and he is as sure that the stars constantly

¹ *Parad.*, XII, 140–1.

² *Quæst.* 2, 106, 4.

³ *Op. Tert.*, c. 66. Contrast the scornful attitude of St. Austin, *De Divers. Quæst.*, LXXXIII., qu. lxv.

⁴ Cf. Sir A. W. Ward, *Old English Drama*, 1901, p. xxxiv, for the magical origin of invention.

⁵ *Op. Maius*, II, 365 n

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 379.

⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 449.

influence the life of man as that the circle has been squared. Nor was this belief singular. The *Divina Commedia* is full of the notion that the stars exercise control over human destiny.¹ To Aquinas as to Roger Bacon the saving clause, *salvâ arbitrii libertate*, was always added. Aristotle and Plato, Cicero and Pliny, Avicenna (A.D. 980-1037) and Albumazar were agreed in holding the free will of man remained uncoerced by the motions of the heavenly bodies. It is noteworthy that St. Austin dwells on the points that separate the Christian from Porphyry (A.D. 233-c. 305) and Seneca: Roger Bacon emphasizes the points of union. Bacon in the *Opus Minus* investigates alchemy. *Inter alia* he refers to an explosive mixture "producing a noise like thunder and flashes of light,"² and tells us that "from saltpetre and other ingredients we are able to make a fire that shall burn at any distance we please."³ Here was a form of gunpowder though its discoverer was unaware of its projective power. Of his recipe for manufacturing gunpowder Colonel Hime speaks in the warmest praise, concluding that his method of refining saltpetre "falls little short of the modern method pursued at Waltham Abbey."⁴

One reason at least for the impression science now makes is that it can exhibit machines which cannot help striking the eye. The ordinary man in the middle of the nineteenth century was as much astonished by a railway engine as we were ten years ago by an aeroplane. On the other hand the mediæval scientist produced nothing except ponderous folios. Francis Bacon compared such an investigator, not to the bees, who mould what they gather, nor even to the ants, who at least collect, but to the spiders, evolving unsubstantial theory from self-extracted argument. If Roger Bacon had had machinery at his disposal he might have devised artillery. Could he have shown Edward I cannon, such a practical demonstration of the utility of science would have contributed enormously to its advance. Fulton (1765-1815) failed to convince Napoleon of the practicability of the invasion of England by steamboat, simply because he was unable to show to the greatest genius in war the world has ever seen a boat at work. The idea was right: what was wanting was its application. This is as true of Bacon as it is of Fulton. Moreover, there were many scientists in the Middle Ages—had they only known it. No one can read the tomes of the schoolmen without seeing that some of them were scientists who had gone astray because their proper subject—or, at any rate, the method of exploring it—was as yet in the womb of time.

In science Roger Bacon was as much before his time as Francis Bacon (1561-1629) was in advance of his. Roger endured long and bitter persecutions, yet he was full of hope for the future. The spirit in which he looked forward to an age of wider knowledge was the same

¹ *Purgat.*, XXX, 109-11; *Parad.*, VIII, 127-32. Cf. St. Thom. Aquin., *Summa Theologica*, Pars I, quæst. 115, art. 3 and 4.

² *Op. Minus*, c. 8.

³ *Ibid.*, c. 11.

⁴ Roger Bacon, *Commemorative Essays*, pp. 321-35 (ed. by A. G. Little).

as that expressed in one of his own citations from Seneca—"veniet tempus quo ista quæ nunc latent, in lucem dies extrahat et longioris ævi diligentia."¹

He freely criticized his predecessors, from Aristotle down to Alexander of Hales (? 1245), Albert and Aquinas. Their errors are to be corrected with modesty and deference.² Seneca assists him to denounce the blind following of authority.³ According to him, Aristotle, Plato, St. Austin, and Boëthius, have preferred truth to authority.⁴ He is evidently pleased to find that Aristotle discusses all the opinions of his predecessors.⁵ Still, great as Aristotle is, he is not perfect.⁶ The people are to be distrusted because their assertions are usually false: over them authority exercises the greatest influence. They form obstacles to progress: they have never discovered anything and they utterly fail to recognize those who have. Bacon thoroughly shared the feeling of the Renaissance in this respect. "Odi profanum vulgus et arceo," a sentiment which explains the tendency of scholars like Reuchlin to fly to the cabalistic books. Marcus Aurelius similarly despaired of the mass of average humanity and for similar reasons. Progress has undoubtedly come from a chosen few. The multitude did not follow Moses to Mount Sinai, nor did all the disciples proceed to the Mount of Transfiguration.⁷

In his *Opus Maius* and in his *Opus Tertium* Bacon analyses the obstacles to the spread of learning. The former is divided into seven parts. In Part I he discusses four causes of human ignorance, authority, custom, popular opinion and the pride of supposed knowledge.⁸ The latter gives us a sketch of the life of its author, and proceeds to point out the impediments he encounters through the ignorance, prejudice and indifference of his contemporaries. Bacon notes that Aristotle declares that the main causes of human error are custom and popular opinion.⁹ Of the usual translations of Aristotle this Franciscan lays down that "so great is their perversity and difficulty that no one is able to understand them." For example, in the account of animal intelligence¹⁰ and in that of the lunar rainbow¹¹ these troubles are experienced. Then comes a fierce denunciation of the leading mediæval philosopher. "If I had all the books of Aristotle in my power, I should cause every one of them to be burnt, because studying them is a loss of time, and a cause of error, and a multiplication of ignorance, beyond what can be explained."¹² He knows his Aristotle and repeatedly appeals to him on all manner of questions. Did he perceive the principles which "the philosopher"

¹ Seneca, *Quæst. Natur.*, VII, 25, 4.

² *Op. Maius*, part i, ch. vii, p. 15.

³ *Op. Maius*, part i, ch. vii, p. xv. ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 54.

⁵ *Op. Maius*, part i, ch. iv, p. 9; ch. xvi, p. 32.

⁶ *Op. Tert.*, XXII; *Compendium Philos.*, cap. ii; *Op. Maius*, pp. 2, 9.

⁷ *Op. Tert.*, I, 4.

⁸ *Op. Maius*, II, 110.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 40, 212 ff.; II, 193.

¹⁰ *Ep.* 123, § 6.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, I, 81.

¹² *Ibid.*, 469.

—so Bacon's age looked upon him ¹—laid down? Did he, for instance, understand the principle of the survival of the fittest which the classical writer deliberately rejected? There is little evidence that such a far-reaching idea penetrated his mind. That he knew the *Physics* is obvious. Thus he discusses the Aristotelian views of the vacuum,² on the natural forces, on sense,³ on action proportional to quantity of force,⁴ on heaven as a physical agent,⁵ and on the infinite divisibility of matter.⁶ He criticizes Aristotle's inadequate account of the lunar phases⁷ and of the phenomenon of scintillation.⁸ He quotes incorrectly Aristotle's explanation of the "Milky Way," as though it were the same as his own.⁹ The philosopher explains the phenomenon arising from the motion of many *large* stars, whereas Bacon explains it as consisting of many *minute* stars, which give the eye the impression of a continuous band of light.

The knowledge of the works of the Creator led to the spanning of the gulf between theology and science. Bacon declares that, as Aristotle by ways of wisdom gave Alexander the kingdom of the world, so Science can enable the Church to triumph over Antichrist by disclosing the secrets of nature and art. The connexion between theology and the study of languages is close and clear. Grosseteste (c. 1175–1253) leant to the systems of declensions of Theodosius (346–395) which Bacon rejects.¹⁰ He vehemently protests against the use of force in the conversion of the unbeliever, holding that persuasion is the proper method.

To Bacon, as to Averroes (1120–1198), complete knowledge of the most minute description is impossible, were it not for the continuity of intellectual development through the ages. Theology is to him the queen of the sciences, *una scientia dominatrix*.¹¹ Implicitly all knowledge is revealed in the Bible, and the efforts of man are directed towards making explicit what is already implicit.¹² At the same time mathematics is "the gate and the key" of all the other sciences,¹³ and he was quite familiar with the higher mathematics of his day. Like Grosseteste he held that natural philosophy advanced in so far as it was founded on mathematics, that force is ruled by mathematical law, and is determined regularly and uniformly in space and time, and it followed that it can be expressed by "lines, angles and figures."¹⁴ Bacon works out these properties generally in the fourth book of the *Opus Maius*, which Whewell rightly called the encyclopædia and the *organum* of the thirteenth century, where he dwells on the use of mathematics, and he works them out

¹ *Op. Maius*, I, 55.

² *Ibid.*, II, 418; cf. II, 457.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 449.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 109.

⁵ *Meteorologica*, I, c. 8.

⁶ Cf. M. R. James in *A Græco-Latin Lexicon of the Thirteenth Century* in *Mélanges offertes à M. Émile Chatelain*, p. 396 ff.

⁷ *Op. Maius*, I, 35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 42, c. 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 97.

¹⁰ Cf. Grosseteste's *De lineis angulis et figuris*.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, I, 145.

¹² *Ibid.*, II, 443 ff.

¹³ *Ibid.*, II, 441.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 120.

particularly in the fifth part, where he applies them to optics.¹ He insists that "the conclusions arrived at by argument must be verified by experiment."² It is, however, not probable that he was able to carry his counsels into practice, nor does he discuss the conditions of the experiments he advises. He is clear that experimental science constitutes the condition of progress.³ He refers to passages in the *De Cælo* dealing with the trinity of nature,⁴ the incorruptibility of the heavens⁵—a favourite notion with him—Aristotle's account of the lunar phases⁶ and the spherical form of the world. He quotes from the *De Cælo* the statement that there are not more worlds than one⁷ and that the South Pole is really above the North Pole.⁸ He wants to ascertain the source of the Nile.⁹ Historically, Bacon's use of the *De Cælo* acquires considerable importance. From it he quotes the passages on the small extent of the sea between Spain and India.¹⁰ In the *Imago Mundi* of Pierre d'Ailly (1350-c. 1420) this part of the *Opus Maius* was transferred, after the mediæval fashion, without acknowledgment. Columbus (c. 1436-1506) read the *Imago Mundi*, and in 1498 he informed Ferdinand and Isabella that it was among the authorities which had induced him to set out on the epoch-making voyage of 1492. It is probable that Seneca was the author of the tragedy which contains an unconscious prophecy of the discovery of the New World—

*Venient annia sæcula seris
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
Tethysque novos detegat orbes ;
Nec sit terris ultima Thule.*¹¹

The study of the phenomena of light evidently fascinated Bacon, and he is constantly returning to it. He is curious to understand the influence of the sun on generation,¹² the method of the propagation of light through space,¹³ the formation of the lunar rainbow,¹⁴ the source of stellar light,¹⁵ the occultation of the stars,¹⁶ the illumination of all the stars by the sun,¹⁷ the effect of vacuum on vision,¹⁸ and is clear that light is not an emanation from the body.¹⁹ He anticipated the discovery made by Ole Roemer in Paris in 1676 that the propagation of light is not instantaneous. He refuses on this subject to accept the views of Aristotle²⁰ which, he notes, had been adopted by Alkindi, the ninth-century philosopher of Bagdad, and had been opposed by Alhazen, the eleventh-century philosopher of Cairo. Bacon's reasons for thinking that light

¹ Cf. Bacon's *De multiplicatione specierum*.

² *Op. Maius*, 371.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 109.

⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 307 (II, 25, 8).

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 290 ; *De Cælo*, II, 14-5 ; cf. Seneca

⁷ *Medea*, act ii (chorus).

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 457, 691.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 127.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 446 ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, 49, 506.

¹² *Ibid.*, part vi.

¹³ *Ibid.*, II, 447.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 64 (I, 9).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 323.

¹⁶ *Quæst. Natur.*, I, § 13.

¹⁷ *Op. Maius*, I, 380.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 40.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 127.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 67.

²¹ *De Anima*, II, 7, c. 3.

takes time to move from place to place are enough to establish his claim to the position of a great scientist. Implicitly he holds the view which regards the radiation of light through space as a type of the radiant activities of colour, force, sound and heat: they are all simply modes of motion. He maintains, for instance, that radiant force proceeds independently of man's power of perceiving it.¹ He forms a clear conception of the microscope. He is aware of the power of a combination of lenses to bring distant objects near, though there exists no proof that he combined them to make a telescope. He lacked two of our artificial senses, the microscope and the telescope, which introduce us to the inconceivably minute and the immensely vast, thus revolutionizing our notions of creation.

As Bacon speculates on the future he dreams of the infinite progress to be reached in science: he is the Condorcet (1743-1794) of the thirteenth century. His influence, however, was not widespread in his own day, or for almost 300 years. No care was taken of his manuscripts. His fruitful ideas lay, like Seneca's, buried in them till another Bacon arose. No scholar of the thirteenth or fourteenth century quotes him or approves or disapproves of his opinions, revolutionary as some of them are. The philosopher disappears: the astrologer and the magician appear. In default of history legend adopts him, making him a figure as fantastic as that of Faust. At the end of the sixteenth century only three of his minor works had come from the printing-press. When the telescope had been invented, the parts of the *Opus Maius*, dealing with mathematics and optics—which included his forecast of the telescope²—at last appeared at Frankfort in 1614 in the edition of the Marburg professor, Combach, and this edition Newton (1642-1727) was destined to see.

Europe went through—and required to go through—three Renaissances, the first in the eighth century; the second in the twelfth; the third in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first reintroduced something of the old Roman education; the second introduced Aristotle and the learning of the Arabs; the third resuscitated the whole culture of the classical world. The first prepared the way for the second; the second for the third. The third originated that new birth of the human spirit which we emphatically call the Renaissance. Admiration for antiquity became its hall-mark. Art and literature threw off the forms of mediævalism and looked for all their inspiration to the models of the ancient world. Platonic societies were formed in Italy, and Plato was found to be a theologian, a prophet. The New Learning tended in many quarters to place Plato on the pedestal formerly occupied by Aristotle. That is, the scholar substituted for the works of a thinker, with possibilities of progress foreshadowed, the works of one whose ideal lay in the past.

The whole history of the Renaissance is a commentary on the wise and the unwise use of the classics. The wise used the antique knowledge in order to think for themselves, the unwise in order to have their thinking

¹ *De multiplicatione specierum*, 478; *Op. Maius*, II, 478.

² *Op. Maius*, II, 165, c. 3.

done for them. The Renaissance transferred interest from form to matter, nevertheless in not a few cases form dominated the thought of men. Such men reflected the minds of others, with the inevitable result that they never really made classical ideas part and parcel of their system of thought. The experience of the past dominated their own experience. They accepted the truths of Plato and Cicero in the spirit in which a pupil accepts the thinking of a master. Their acceptance was purely mechanical, and instead of some of them becoming masters in their turn they remained in perpetual tutelage. The questions they raised are worthy of Browning's Grammarian. Was *mibi* to be written with a "c"? Could one use a form of a verb when it was not to be found in Cicero's works? Many of them were mediæval in spirit, with a veneer of classical learning. In them the Middle Ages persisted long after 1492. Men used to read the writings of Thomas Aquinas or Albert the Great: the new fashion was to read those of Cicero and Plato, and the spirit in which they were read is the spirit in which the scholastic writings had been perused. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. The book is different: the reader is the same. One scholar is penetrated with the inner meaning of Plato: he is a rare type of the Renaissance. Another simply sees the words are beautiful words and remains content with the surface meaning: he is the common type. Does he not think that certain Latin words possess a magical power? Poliziano was such a scholar. Propertius wrote *pinus amata*: Poliziano writes *pinus amata*. Pliny wrote *morus sapiens*: he writes *morus sapiens*. Virgil wrote *gelidæ pruinæ*: he writes *gelidæ pruinæ*. If a classical author described the sensation in certain phraseology, no other phraseology can be employed. In a word, feeling is in no wise human: it is simply literary. Between life and the representation of life stands the artificial figure of antiquity. When the classics were so read they were among the most deadly enemies of progress, causing the death, not the rebirth, of thought.

The geographical discoveries of the age brought into prominence cycles of another kind, the cycle of incessant movement—growth, expansion, short-lived conquest, followed by shrinkage, defeat, expulsion or absorption by another set of migrants. The written history of mankind is to be read largely in the shiftings of peoples, now going forward, then thrusting back. Society was approaching a dynamic stage, though of course it never is static. The great service Copernicus (1473–1543) rendered to mankind was the conception of the perpetual motion of this world. Motion there is in the worlds above, and incessant motion there is in the worlds beneath. Petrarch (1304–1374) is sometimes called the first modern man,¹ and on the literary side a case may be made out for this designation. He was, however, as blind as Dante (1265–1321) to the forces about him which made for political and scientific progress. What was fatal to the poem of Dante was the work of Copernicus. There was no longer any distinction between the heavens and the earth. True, the earth became a heavenly body, but for all time to come the substance

¹ E.g. by Renan, *Averroes*, p. 328, ed. 1882.

of the heavenly was precisely the same as that of the earthly. It was no longer possible to credit the belief that the stars influenced the destiny of man, for their motions were governed by the same laws as that of the globe we inhabit. Man was once more a mote in the unfathomable universe. Four generations after Copernicus, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) could say, "Le silence éternel de ces espaces m'effraie." The first modern man was the astronomer, the first to cherish a scientific conception of progress.

The thought of Copernicus is evident in the thought of Guillaume Postel (1510-81), professor of mathematics and languages in the Collège de France. The title of his book is *De orbis terrarum concordia libri quatuor, multijuga eruditione ac pietate referenti, quibus nihil hoc tam perturbato rerum statu vel utilius vel accomodatius potuisse in publicum edi, quivis æquus lector iudicabit. Gulielmo Postello Barentonio, mathematicum in academia lutetiano professore regio, authore.* There is no printer's name: it was published in the middle of the sixteenth century. Like Kant, Postel thought out a sort of cosmopolitan State, a fraternal alliance of peoples, under the empire of a right of mankind universally recognized; and like Kant he believed that this alliance could be realized under the form of the Church. It was for this end he wrote his book, which was specially destined for the conversion of the Jews and the Mohammedans and, above all, of those who threatened the civilization of Europe with the invasion of new barbarians. In it we meet with a crowd of ideas and facts invoked to-day by the defenders of the theory of indefinite progress. For instance, Postel teaches that wars and the calamities which follow in their train are the providential means destined to push nations into the path of progress. The conquests of the Mohammedans seem to him to be the exception to this rule, and he hoped his book would be instrumental in leading them to the light and unity of the Christian faith.¹ In a chapter devoted to the development of the dogma of the Trinity, Postel writes the following passage in which we have no trouble in recognizing the fundamental idea of the work of Lessing (1729-1781): "*Lex Mosaica fuit velut rudimentum quoddam legis divinæ. . . . In ea lege, ut in summa Dicam, Deus fecit cum Israël, quod optimus præceptor cum adolescente admodum discipulo, cui cum radicibus disciplinæ ob ætatis teneritudinem et ignorantiam etiam ludos solitos permittit. . . . In tradendis disciplinis autoritas est ratione prior. Unde merito scriptum est: Nisi credideritis non intelligetis. Quod non solum in sacris, sed in humanioribus literis locum habet. Quis enim posset puerum formare statim ab ipsius elementis refractarium? Debebat itaque præcedere religio, sequi ratio.*"²

As we turn over the folio of Postel we catch a glimpse of the true spirit of the Renaissance writer. Do we remember sufficiently how long it was before this spirit of the belief in progress was destined to prevail? In political circles, as well as in literary and scientific, it was not rare to meet with the ancient notion of the circular theory of the movement of

¹ *De orbis terrarum*, II, præf., p. 126.

² *Ibid.*, III, pp. 23-4. The italics in the quotation are mine.

peoples and civilizations. If on the one hand there are the names of Rabelais (1495-1553), Campanella (1568-1639), and Francis Bacon, on the other there are the no less renowned names of Machiavelli (1469-1527), Bodin (1530-96) and Montaigne (1533-92).

Machiavelli estimates the level of human character as low as either Luther or Montaigne. The world is neither better nor worse than it was a thousand years ago. As the amount of matter on earth is exactly what it was in the time of Plato, so is the amount of badness and goodness. Power, in accordance with Bishop Berkeley's law, used to be in Assyria, then in Media, then in Persia, until at last it came to Italy and Rome. Badness and goodness are therefore simply migrating westward—that is all. There is no progress: the world is always the same.¹ Are there not revolutions? Yes, but they only alter the distribution of power. Some institutions improve, and others fail to do so: the level is the same after a revolution as before it. Still, if there is no progress, there is at least no decadence. Machiavelli contents himself with reproducing the despairing doctrine of the Stoics on the cyclical movements of men and institutions. In his opinion every form of society and government bears within it a germ of corruption, an element of dissolution and ruin.² In a circle ceaselessly turn all the imaginable social forms.

Bodin, who limits himself almost wholly to combining the ideas of Plato and Aristotle with those of Machiavelli, lays down the principle that men follow the pursuit of a chimera when they seek the realization of the ideal. "When I speak of the flourishing state of a republic, I do not mean that it has arrived at the height of perfection."³ Bodin displays a fondness for definition, and Grotius notes that he cares more for words than for things. Giving an excessive importance to the classical writers, he ranks Homer and Hesiod high, and the melancholy of these two poets attaches to Bodin himself. As the younger Pitt was not born but cast in a mould, so Bodin's thought remained immovable. When a young man he defended the astrological view that numbers influence the destiny of man, and when an old man he still defended this view. As a young man he attacked the Copernican system, and as an old man he persisted in his attack. Is there a philosopher's stone? He is not sure: Nature guards her secrets closely. If God and man legislate against sorcery, this of itself proves the existence of sorcery. Tolerant as he is, Bodin regards atheism as a crime to be punished.⁴ The compass, geographical discovery, astronomical laws, the invention of artillery—these are sufficiently striking witnesses of the progress in his day. Bodin, however, deems that printing only deserves comparison with the discoveries of antiquity.⁵ Like Montaigne, he is as much impressed by the novelty of the ideas of his day as by their truth. The stranger the tale of the traveller the more he—and Montaigne—is pleased.

¹ *Discorsi*, book ii.

² *Disc. ad Hist.*, book iii, c. ii; book iii, cc. i and xliii.

³ *Les six livres de la République*, IV.

⁴ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 590; *Theatrum Naturæ*, 5.

⁵ *Methodus*, VII, 360 ff.

Anticipating the Pragmatists, Bodin thrusts to the one side all means of attaining knowledge save experience, which is "maistresse de toute certitude."¹ On the other hand, he can hold that our senses deceive us, that our reason is unworthy of trust. "L'entendement descouure et fait iugement de l'erreur des sens. . . . La raison est donc comme la reigle de Polyclète, par laquelle on corrige les erreurs des sens, s'ils ont failly en quelque chose: et laquelle n'a pas tousiours faute de l'aide d'iceux en ses diuines operations."² It is easy to see why he finds it hard to know God, why he believes in mystical experience.³ In theory Bodin advocates freedom of thought: in practice he falls back on authority. Like Machiavelli, he believes in witchcraft, and he disbelieves in the discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo. He returns to the Bible: "laquelle nous préferons a toutes les raisons que l'on pourroit alleguer a l'encontre."⁴ There is a pæan on progress in his *Methodus*, but it is plainly inconsistent with the tenor of his fundamental thought.⁵ God, he proclaims, is free to act as He pleases, and Bodin draws the conclusion that accordingly the laws of nature are not fixed.⁶ If these laws are not fixed, he wonders if there is the possibility of scientific knowledge.

Alive to the many-sided influence of the age, Montaigne experienced the severe shock administered by the exploration of the world. It is significant that he regards this exploration not so much as an addition to knowledge as simply a variety of opinion, a change of sensation.⁷ To him it is disturbing to find that the cosmography of Ptolemy is refuted by the voyage of Columbus. The strange experiences and the unheard customs of America smashed mediæval unity into a thousand fragments, and Montaigne is left without a mental shelter.⁸ In place of the unity of the scholastic authors there are the dissensions of the classical. In place of the oneness of Church and State there is an ever-growing diversity of life, which reveals to him the transformation. Man's character used to be a known, a constant quantity: now it is unknown, an inconstant quantity. The world used to be unchanging: now it is incessantly changing. The dissensions, the inconstancy and the change suggest to him that absolute judgment is impossible, and relative judgment no more than barely possible. "Que sçais-je?" is the poignant question. He answers with perfect frankness that he knows nothing. He is a sceptic who doubts even scepticism. Clearly Montaigne belongs to the school of Pyrrho in ancient times and to that of H. Spencer in modern. Rabelais seeks new ideas in the flask of the scientist: Montaigne, like Casaubon, seeks them in the folio of the schoolman.

There was need for reform in Church and State, but the reform must be of a conservative order. Montaigne and Bodin agree that it is better

¹ *Theatrum Naturæ*, II, 9, 350; III, 12, 553.

² *Ibid.*, IV, 9, p. 685.

³ *Démonomanie*, Preface, 17 ff.

⁴ *Theatrum Naturæ*, II, 6, 261; *Heptaplomeres*, III, 172-3.

⁵ *Methodus*, VII.

⁶ *Theatrum Naturæ*, I, 3, 31 ff.

⁷ *Essais*, 2, XII, vol. 2, 291-2 (ed. Louandre).

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, XXV, vol. 1, 216 (ed. Louandre).

to preserve an old religion, even if false, than to destroy it if there is nothing to take its place. Montaigne obeys the laws of his country not because they are just but because authority orders them. Better legislation is readily conceivable, but, like Bodin and Burke, this Conservative fears that in the desire to secure a good measure an evil one may take its place. "Ceulx," he points out, "qui ont essayé de r'adviser les mœurs du monde, de mon temps, par nouvelles opinions, réforment les vices de l'apparence; ceulx de l'essence, ils les laissent là, s'ils ne les augmentent: et l'augmentation y est à craindre; on se séjourne volontiers de tout aultre bienfaire, sur ces réformations externes, arbitraires, de moindre coust et de plus grand merite; et satisfait on à bon marche, par là, les aultres vices naturels, consubstantiels et intestins." A belief in progress is impossible when a man is such a pessimist. That he rated mankind at its lowest is clear from the inscriptions written upon the beams of his study. These also bear plain witness to his attitude to reason.¹ He endorses the Pyrrhonian maxims taken from the Hypotyposes—"No reason without its contrary": "It may be, it may not be": "No man has ever known, or ever will know, anything certain." To him, as to Copernicus, there is nothing absolutely false, nothing absolutely true: everything is relative. In his writings Montaigne sometimes speaks of the mind of man as if it were "un grand ouvrier de miracles," and sometimes he rails at it as "un outil vagabond, dangereux et téméraire." "Truth and falsehood," according to him, "have the same visage, the same port, taste, proceedings." He was more pagan in his plea for pleasure—his chief aim—and in his contempt of death than the pagans themselves. He was disgusted with novelty, he says, in whatever form it came. Instead of sharing the enthusiasm of Bacon and Campanella, Montaigne notes all around him signs of decrepitude, symptoms of decadence, in the intellectual fertility of his country.² In his attitude to science he is as mediæval as the schoolmen themselves. Discoveries like those of Vasco da Gama are simply so many varieties of human opinion. The passionate desire of truth, the willingness to die for an idea, appeared to him an "excess of virtue," worse than an "excess of vice." Pragmatist at heart as he is, he disbelieved in intellect as much as Rabelais and Bacon believed in it. For example, a shock has been given to the authority of the schoolmen, who dominated Europe for five hundred years. This length of time did not guarantee the truth of the system. Is anything true? Scepticism of all results is Montaigne's attitude. He was so confirmed a believer in the incertitude of his judgment that he was content to rest the decision on the drawing of lots or the throwing of dice.

From the elder Pliny Montaigne takes the view, "There is nothing certain but that nothing is certain, and nothing at once more wretched and more proud than man." What use is learning in the conduct of life? Do not knowledge and the imagination which knowledge brings in its train aggravate, not assuage, the pain and the suffering of men?

¹ *Essais*, 2, XII.

² *Ibid.*, 1, 87; 2, 528-9; 3, 814, 955, and 1096 (Rouen).

Does Copernicus, after all, contribute to human happiness when he demonstrates that man is not the centre of the universe? The ancients hold that the sun moves. Copernicus says the earth moves. How long will it be before another discoverer upsets the conclusions of Copernicus by fresh assertions? ¹

The uncertainty of human knowledge, the inconstancy of human action, diversity its most characteristic quality—these are the titles of three of Montaigne's essays. Bishop Butler looked on probability as a guide in life: the French moralist requires certainty, stability. The variety of views entertained by the philosophers proves that they regard reason as "a toy for any one to play with," "a vain and frivolous instrument." Paracelsus discovers modern remedies—or pretends he does—for ancient diseases, but Montaigne is plainly of the view that "it were small wisdom to commit my life to the mercy of his new experimenting." His conclusion is, "Par cete variété et instabilité d'opinion, ilz nous menent comme par la main, tacitement, a cete resolution de leur irrésolution." ² "Ce que nous appelons la science n'est qu'une inquisition sans arrêt et sans but." The thing that hath been is that which shall be, and for Montaigne there is no new thing under the sun. "It is ever"—such is his contention—"one and the same Nature which rolls on her course. He who has thoroughly learned to know her estate in the present can safely conclude from it all the future and all the past." ³ Clearly he looked before and after, and equally clearly he did not pine for that which is not.

Three men of very different positions, different in origin and nature—Rabelais, Campanella, and Francis Bacon—announce almost simultaneously that Christian societies have entered into a path of progress in which the fear of retrogression must be dismissed as chimerical.

Expelled in 1524 by the Franciscans of Fontenay-le-Comte for his attachment to science, Rabelais cares for botany, taking up with special zest the classification of plants and flowers of newly discovered countries. The new materials upset the old classifications, and with their advent departs the certainty that Rabelais possesses the whole of truth. To the mediæval mind chance accounted for most things: to Rabelais law accounted for everything. Instead of arbitrary proceedings he set forth to his age orderly and ordered ones. The discovery of truth is not empirical: it is scientific. Rabelais pays homage to the progress of learning in the letter Gargantua addresses to his son, Pantagruel. He says that among the gifts and graces with which the Creator has adorned mankind, he places in the front rank the faculty of transforming his mortal state into a sort of immortal by the transmission of life and science from one generation to another.⁴ To him education furnished the key to the new era that he hoped would be happier than the old. He believed in the virtues of toleration as profoundly as Montaigne or Bodin, and in the future of science as deeply as Goethe.

¹ Montaigne would have found no difficulty in accepting Prof. Einstein's conclusions.

² *Essais*, 2, XII.

³ *Ibid.*, 2, XII.

⁴ *Pantagruel*, II, c. viii, 122 (Louis Barré).

The range of the interests of Rabelais remind the reader of Leonardo da Vinci, for he is humanist and grammarian, antiquary and jurisconsult, student of medicine and of theology. He is not content to read about the subject-matter of his scientific pursuits, for, anticipating Vesalius, he dissects the human body. The reading of Latin and Greek classics is not sufficient for him. Gargantua advises Pantagruel to study Hebrew, Chaldee and Arabic, and to read and re-read the books of the Latin, Greek, and Arabic doctors.¹ Hippocrates and Galen he peruses as well as Plato and Plutarch. The schoolmen, however, he refuses to read: their discussions are sterile and their language confusing.² He believes it is more important to observe the movement of the pulse of a patient than to observe the movement of the stars.³ He parodies the predictions of the caster of nativities and derisively quotes the titles of his tomes.⁴

Rabelais' *Peut-être* suggests dissatisfaction with the state of knowledge then existing, the need for examination, and for freedom of examination. In the abbey of Thelema there is complete liberty of conscience. Scientific knowledge in the future will increase, though he disclaims all astrological knowledge of the future. "These are mysteries of the secret counsel of the eternal King, who rules, according to his free will and good pleasure, everything that is and that is done."⁵ At the conclusion of *Pantagruel* the priestess tells Panurge, "When you come to your world, testify that under the earth there are great treasures and wonderful things. Your philosophers who complain that all things have been discovered by the ancients, and that nothing has been left for them to find out, are obviously wrong. All that the earth has produced is not comparable to what is still concealed in it."⁶ It is a striking prophecy, though scarcely less striking is the stress Gargantua lays on the principle that "science without conscience is only the ruin of the soul."⁷ This does not mean for a moment that, as with Bodin, the Bible is exempt from criticism. Rabelais is clear that some narratives, e.g. that of the Deluge and of the Ark, that of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, are in his opinion legendary. He is just as clear that reason cannot cover the whole of life: faith must step in, but faith must not ask man to believe what is contrary to reason.

The Dominican Campanella (1568-1639), the anticipator of Descartes, is no less explicit, no less ardent in the manifestation of his hopes. The prediction of a radical change, the arrival of powerful reformers, the necessity of a revolution—nothing is wanting in the literary and political programme of this audacious monk. In his *Apologia pro Galileo* he maintains that it is from observation, not from opinion, that progress arises.⁸ He sets forth the dangers of men trusting in the folio, the definition of terms. For his part, he was determined to "compare

¹ *Pantagruel*, II, 8.

² *Ibid.*, I, 17-19, especially 19.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 7.

⁵ Rabelais, *Almanac for 1533*.

⁶ *Pantagruel*, V, xlvii, 527 (Louis Barré).

⁷ *Ibid.*, c. I, 5, 36, 224 (Juste).

⁸ *Apologia pro Galileo*, 30.

books with that first and original writing, the world." Men must begin to reason not a priori, but from the objects lavishly provided by nature. Then "definition is the end and epilogue of science." With Galileo he holds that philosophy is written in that great book, the universe, which is constantly open before our eyes; though he also holds that it cannot be understood except we first know the language and learn the characters in which it is written. In the dialogues between a Grand Master of the Knights Hospitallers and a Genoese sea captain—which is the form *The City of the Sun* assumes—Campanella predicts at once the literary revival and the political transformation of the world.¹ In the last page of this vision of Utopia he tells us that there men "worship God in Trinity, saying God is the supreme Power, whence proceeds the highest Wisdom, which is the same with God, and from these comes Love, which is both Power and Wisdom; but they do not distinguish persons by name, as in our Christian law, which has not been revealed to them. This religion, when its abuses have been removed, will be the future mistress of the world, as great theologians teach and hope. Therefore Spain found in the New World (though its first discoverer, Columbus, greatest of heroes, was a Genoese) that all nations should be gathered under one law. We know what we do, but God knows whose instruments we are. They sought new regions for lust of gold and riches, but God works to a higher end. The sun strives to burn up the earth, not to produce plants and men, but God guides the battle to great issues. His the praise, to Him the Glory!

"GRAND MASTER. Oh, if you knew what our astrologers say of the coming age, and of our age, that has in it more history within a hundred years than all the world had in four thousand years before! Of the wonderful invention of printing and guns, and the use of the magnet, and how it all comes of Mercury, Mars, the Moon, and the Scorpion.

"CAPTAIN. Ah, well, God gives all in His good time. They astrologize too much."

Campanella is convinced that a vast change was taking place in the world, and that it was his task to announce it.² In his *Prodromus philosophiæ instaurandæ* he, like Bacon, provides a plan for the restoration of all forms of learning. He is completely confident that if man possesses freedom of thought he can develop new knowledge. "The future ages will judge us," he proudly announces, "the present age crucifies its benefactors; but they will rise the third day of the third age."³ In his old age, alluding to the shape of his head, he still holds, "I am the bell of the seven mountains, the bell which announces the new dawn."⁴

A contemporary of Campanella, less bold but much more enlightened than the author of *The City of the Sun*, Francis Bacon, grasped the idea

¹ *City of the Sun*, 204-8, 228, 232.

² *Ibid.*, 232.

³ *Œuvres choisies*, p. 27.

⁴ Cf. *Atheismus triumphatus*, 236.

of the renewal of the modern world by the aid of the intellectual labours of successive generations.¹ Bacon is often reproached with making no real contribution to science. The criticism is just, but it is not well founded. His rôle was that of a herald. "I am but a trumpeter," he proclaimed, "not a combatant." Peace, especially theological peace, is a prime condition for the success of his scheme. He likens himself to the miller of Huntingdon "that was wont to pray for peace amongst the willows; for while the winds blew, the windmills wrought, and the water-mill was less customed. So I see that controversies of religion must hinder the advancement of sciences."²

Scientific investigators work, as a rule, on facts and observations they collect. Bacon urged them to amass facts and evolve cosmos out of chaos. His method is wrong; still there is no mistaking the enthusiasm of the man who writes that "without such a natural and experimental history . . . no progress worthy of the human race in Philosophy and the Sciences could possibly be made; whereas if such a history were once provided, and well ordered, with the addition of such auxiliary and light-giving experiments as the course of Interpretation would itself suggest, the investigation of Nature and of all the Sciences would be the work of only a few years."³ In this fashion he hopes to get rid of the ancient hypothesis that men are condemned to return always in a circle.

Did not the schoolmen employ experience? Truly they did, but it was not to consult her as an adviser but to drag her at their chariot-wheels as a captive. In his *Historia Vitæ et Mortis* Bacon is well aware of the utility of provisional hypotheses. In the preface to his *Magnum opus* Copernicus had announced, "Neither let any one, so far as hypotheses are concerned, expect anything certain from Astronomy; since science can afford nothing of the kind." Bacon attacked the Copernican discovery, and no doubt some of his hostility was prompted by the circumstance that the astronomer was pragmatic in his outlook. To Bacon science was making such progress that he could not bear this pessimistic philosopher. His *Novum Organum* is filled with hope. In his *Advancement of Learning*, which he published in 1605, he insists on the wisdom of providing readers in science and of providing the expenses of the experiments these men undertake.⁴ The foundation of the Royal Society was one day to be the outcome of his ideas. It is scarcely three centuries since the idea of the possibility of indefinite progress through man's own conscious efforts first emerged in the minds of a few thoughtful persons. It is to Bacon the glory is due of first popularizing this seminal idea, one of the greatest single ideas in the whole history of mankind in the vista of possibilities it opens before us.

After the first steps towards progress the classical world remained

¹ *De dign. et augm. scientiarum*, I, 20; II, 23; IV, 111; V, 114; VIII, 287-8 (1638 ed.). Cf. *Novum Organum*, I, aphor. 56, 78, 84, 92; *De sapientia veterum*, 315-6 (1638 ed.); *Nova Atlantis*, 367 ff. (1638 ed.).

² Bacon's letter to Toby Matthew, Oct. 10, 1609.

³ Preface to *Parasceue ad Historiam naturalem et experimentalem*.

⁴ *Advancement of Learning*, II, viii, 9, 10.

strangely motionless, or rather, like the rotating wheel, exhibited motion without movement. In Rome, for instance, during most of the imperial period that progress which flows from the advance of technical knowledge was unheard of. Neither in agriculture¹ nor in technical training does a single idea of any significance come to light after the first century: the work of administration also remains at a standstill. It is significant that the Roman heroes are generals and administrators, not philosophers, artists or poets. From Augustus (63 B.C.—A.D. 14) to Diocletian (245–313) the equipment of the legion remains the same. This argument, however, must not be pressed, for a similar remark holds good of the Napoleonic wars (1793–1815). It is more significant that there was no improvement in tactics, no new means of warfare, devised in the course of three centuries. Literature and art are confined to a sterile imitation which ever becomes more empty and feeble. At this time Rome had no rival on earth. Sovereign of the world, she has conquered Europe, Asia, and Africa; she has given proof of a vitalizing power enough to absorb all nationalities without ceasing to be herself. The conquered have ceased to complain and have adopted the language of their conquerors. It is then that Rome despairs of the future and utters an intense cry of distress. There is a loss of energy, a loss of spirit, and failure of nerve which is quite incompatible with progress. The proscriptions brought about what Seeck calls the “Ausrottung der Besten.” It was a world where the great fear was that the machine of State would break down, and ultimately Rome ceased to produce characters strong enough to work it.²

The reason why we lay so much stress on future advance, and the Greeks on present permanence or durability, is largely historical. We are, on the whole, extraordinarily safe. Our national civilizations last for an indefinite time. On the other hand the Greek cities were apt to be short-lived, to be overthrown by war or stasis. Consequently they tend chiefly to ask of a society that it shall endure and not simply break up. It is most difficult to realize the constant precariousness of the State, the frightful proximity of death to its members. Our security makes us go further and ask that society shall improve and shall continue improving. The Greeks wanted a divine foundation and security, points which Plato and Thucydides (c. 471–396 B.C.) with countless others render quite plain. At the same time this reason does not cover all the facts. During the fourth century B.C. Athens enjoyed a long political peace, and yet there was no corresponding change in speculation. Again, there were long periods of rest in Roman history, notably during the early empire, with no effects on the attitude to the future. It is noteworthy that the Romans conceived revolution as “something new.” When we speak of progress, are we sure, in the present collapse of the industrial machine in flaming ruin, that we have had for the last 300 years a sound conception of it? Is our idea of the State in its main ends and spirit one

¹ Cf. Mr. Gow's paper on “The Ancient Plough” in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, p. 249.

² G. Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, chap. iii; Seeck, *Gesch. des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, 280 ff.

that will emerge whole and safe from this war? May not the Greek philosophical writers have been nearer the truth in looking coldly on money-making as an end in life, and in treating moral and intellectual culture as the true end of social effort and organization? This would explain, in part at least, their attitude towards material progress.¹ There is another reason. The doctrine of *continuous* change has for its basis the conception of the unity of mankind: it envisages the tribes, the cities, the nations as so many members of a great family. It assigns to each of them a providential rôle in the incommensurable career in which humanity advances. Now these underlying truths were not only unknown to the classical world; the members thereof were profoundly antipathetic to them. The discovery of printing, the impossibility of another *Völkerwanderung*, the greater ease of international relations, all combine in repelling the system by which Machiavelli condemns the human race to eternal oscillations between truth and error.

Human life is the old in the new, the old being in a new aspect. History exhibits that union of two opposites, permanence and progress, which is so baffling to the mind. It has a permanent identity and sameness because it exhibits the same species of being and the same eternal truth in all its sections. It also presents a constant variety and change, because it shows this same human nature and this same common variety in new forms. This co-inherence and co-working of the two factors, of the old and the new, of the conservatism and the progress, is the very essence of history. It is difficult to seize and hold both conceptions at one and the same time, as the constant debate between the man of conservatism and the man of reform shows. It is easy and natural to separate what God has joined together, and to make choice of the one or of the other character as the key to all history and the foundation of all practical life and action. It is simpler to say that history is permanence without progress, or else that it is progress without permanence, than to say that it is a true development and therefore both permanent and progressive. The extremists on both sides have a much easier task than one who occupies the central position between them. For a simple idea is much easier to define and manage than a complex one; but it is neither so fertile nor so completely true.

¹ Cf. J. B. Bury, *The Ancient Greek Historians*, pp. 254-7.

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TABLE OF RULERS

POPES		A.D.	SAXONY		A.D.
Alexander VI (Borgia)	.	.	1493	DUKES, ALBERTINE BRANCH, CADET	
Pius III (Piccolomini)	.	.	1503		
Jullus II (Rovere)	.	.	1503		
Leo X (Medici)	.	.	1513	George (Roman Catholic)	1500
Adrian VI (Boyers)	.	.	1522	Henry (Protestant)	1539
Clement VII (Medici)	.	.	1523	Maurice (Protestant)	1541
Paul III (Farnese)	.	.	1534		
HOLY ROMAN EMPERORS			DUKE OF BRUNSWICK-WOLFEN- BÜTTEL		
Maximilian I	.	.	1493		
Charles V	.	.	1519		
Ferdinand I	.	.	1558	Henry IV	1514
KINGS OF BOHEMIA			DUKES OF BRUNSWICK- LÜNEBURG		
Ladislas II	.	.	1471		
Louis II	.	.	1516	Henry I	1478
Ferdinand I, the Emperor	.	.	1526	Ernest I	1532
MARGRAVES OF BRANDENBURG			DUKE OF SAVOY		
Joachim I.	.	.	1499		
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